

THE
HISTORY
OF
WILL RAMBLE,
A
LIBERTINE.

Compiled from
GENUINE MATERIALS,
AND
The Several INCIDENTS taken from
REAL LIFE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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HISTORY

OF

WILLIAM

LIBERTY

GENUINE MATERIALS

AND

THE HISTORY OF THE



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T H E

(1)

THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
WILL RAMBLE.

BOOK I.

Containing the remarkable Birth of the Libertine, with the Manner of his being brought up.

CHAP. I.

A short Introduction, or some previous Matters necessary for the Reader's Information; and which may serve as an Apology for the Work.

WHatever Spirit we Authors may at this time of day be endued with, it is much to be feared, we are very little, if any Ways, possessed with that of Divination, though such a Gift would exceedingly avail our Labours; as thereby, we might arrive at some Knowledge of the Complexion, Genius, and Taste of our Reader,
VOL. I. B and

and accordingly, be the better enabled to suit our Productions to his Capacity or Desire. But as for want of this Faculty, we are at a loss to know, whether the Reader peruses our Work for Instruction or Entertainment; whether he expects to be edified thereby, or only to meet with a few Hours private Amusement; so we are obliged to manage Matters accordingly: And by a judicious Disposal and Mixture of the *utile & dulci*, of the pleasant and profitable together, endeavour to engage all Attentions, whatever the Object may be that is sought after.

Seeing there cannot be a more sure Manner of Proceeding than this, to arrive at the proposed End of all Writers, (whether antient or modern) which is to benefit and entertain their Readers, and thereby to procure both Satisfaction and Emolument for themselves; therefore we shall closely adhere to it, and keep the aforesaid Method continually in View, during the Course of the following Sheets.

Indeed, few Branches of Learning are subservient to better Purposes than History: Thereby we are made acquainted with the different Characters, Views, Interests,
and

and Designs of Mankind; and by taking a Survey of their Actions and Behaviour according to the different Circumstances they are placed in; and from a due Reflection on their several Virtues and Vices, our Minds become replenished with such a sufficient Stock of infallible Maxims, as will greatly assist us in the Conduct of Life, and enable us to become knowing, prudent, and virtuous. In order, therefore, to conduct our Reader to such a Pitch of Improvement, it manifestly behoves us, not only to trace out to him the Characters and Behaviour of the virtuous Part of the Species, but also sometimes, of the most abandoned: The former may serve as so many shining Lights, fixed at proper Stations, to direct his Course through the dark Channels of Vice; and the latter, as so many Buoys, to keep him off those Rocks and Quick-Sands that lie concealed under the Surface of the Water.

For attaining these salutary Purposes, nothing is more requisite in an Historian, than to keep close to Nature; and to present his Reader with a true Account of Facts, as they succeeded each other in the Time comprehended in his Narrative. This is the Method that must

be pursued by great Historians, such I mean, as treat of the Rise, Fall, and different Revolutions of Empires, Monarchies and Commonwealths; but we Biographers, who purpose to exhibit the Lives of particular Persons, are obliged to take somewhat of a larger Scope, and even to pry into their most minute Actions. For as *Plutarch* observes, in his Introduction to the Life of *Alexander the Great*: “ That
 “ oftentimes the Virtues and Vices of
 “ Men, and their natural Dispositions are
 “ better shewn by exhibiting some of their
 “ minute Actions, or even an Apothegm,
 “ a Sentence, or a Jest of theirs, than by
 “ an Account of their Battles, and of their
 “ besieging and storming of Towns and
 “ Cities, or of those heroic Exploits
 “ which occasioned ten thousand Men to
 “ lie stretched on the Plain.” It is the Nature and Propensity of their Souls that we are to endeavour to trace, as much, if not more than their bodily Performances.

Our Readers may perhaps be at a loss, to know how we are enabled to execute this with due Regard to Veracity, in that Specimen of Writing which we chuse at present to follow, and which generally goes under the Name of *Romance*; but in order

to

to set them right in this Particular, we must inform them, that the Denomination is only affixed to this Sort of Writing by Way of Synecdoche, or Comprehension, a Figure much used by Poets, Orators, and Historians, when they have occasion to adapt a Part for the whole. And indeed, as we are obliged to use fictitious Names in the Representation of several of our Characters, whose Originals are still living, so far our History may be termed romantic; but while we stick close to a true Detail of their Actions, Manners, and Behaviour, so far is it true and real. A Reader must be very weak, who imagines, that ever such a Hero as *Don Quixote* existed under that Name, or that there were such Persons as *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*; yet nobody can in the least doubt, that both *Cervantes* and *Rabelais* had real Originals in Nature, from whence they severally drew their Portraits, though they might disguise the true Appellations of them.

There needs, I believe, very little more to be added in this introductory Chapter, by Way of Apology for these Volumes. The Method of Writing that we have pursued therein, is of longer Standing than what is generally imagined; and having

been lately revived with much Success, we have chose to make use of it.

As we do not design, in Imitation of the Custom used at Fairs, by those droll Fellows, the *Merry-Andrews*, to entertain the Concourse at the Door, with a long Harangue of what is to be performed and seen in the House; so we shall make bold to introduce the Reader without any more previous Ceremony, to such Entertainment as has been in our Power to provide for him; of which the Titles to the several Chapters, will, like the Play-House Bills, give him an Account of what he is to expect in the Representation,

CHAP,

C H A P. II.

An Account of Mr. Hugh Ramble and his Lady; their Manner of living, with some other Matters relating to this History.

TH E R E once dwelt in the East-Riding (or Division) of the most extensive County in this Kingdom, called *Yorkshire*, a Gentleman of a very antient Family, named *Hugh Ramble*: To whom though Nature or Fortune were not over lavish in their Gifts, yet he had received such a Competency of Favours from both, as might have afforded him perfect Ease, if not great Share of Happiness, in this World; could he have applied their several Donations to the best Purposes, and not suffered the Management of them to have been over-ruled by Passion, Folly, or Vice. His Aspect was mild and grave; his Constitution healthy and robust; and his Mind was furnished with very good natural Parts, which required only due Culture, to have appeared much more conspicuous. Thus as Nature had not framed either his Body or Understanding of the meanest Cast, so Fortune had endowed him with a very

competent Estate; and also had given him an Opportunity of considerably improving it, by bestowing on him a Wife with a very good Portion.

His Lady, Mrs. *Rachel Ramble*, was a Woman of great Prudence, very good Sense, and strict Virtue; and, moreover, had received as polite and genteel an Education, as any young Gentlewoman could possibly acquire in those Northern Parts, where she was brought up. Mr. *Hugh Ramble*, her Husband, was exceedingly fond of her, although they had been married near seven Years without having any Issue. But neither his Love for his Wife, nor any Regard to his Estate, could restrain him from pursuing his Pleasures to excess; for he, like many other Gentlemen, was so entirely addicted to the fashionable Vices of Gaming, Horse-Racing, Cock-Fighting, &c. that in a few Years, he not only consumed the Fortune which his Wife had brought him, but had also very considerably dipped his own Estate; so that Mrs. *Ramble* was obliged to exercise the strictest Oeconomy in her Affairs at Home, that her Husband might make the better Figure Abroad amongst his polite Acquaintance.

No

No doubt but Mrs. *Ramble* was very much vexed at the ill Conduct of her Husband; yet we do not find, that she had recourse to any of those Expedients which are generally practised by her Sex, to allay their Passion, or assuage their Grief on similar Occasions; such as Visiting, Gossiping, Card-playing, Drinking, &c. &c. &c. On the contrary, she seldom went Abroad, being contented with amusing herself at Home with reading and Family Business; and never drank any Liquor stronger than Tea, unless in obedience to Mr. *Ramble*, when any slight Indisposition, bad Weather, or, which was oftner the Case, Lowness of Pocket, obliged him to keep at Home.

At such Times as these, when her Spirits were somewhat exhilarated by a Glass of Wine, and her Husband's Company; she would take occasion to set the Consequences of his Manner of Life before him, in such a strong Light, as could not fail convincing him of his Errors, though her Documents were not able to divert him from the usual Pursuit of them: But this was always performed in a very mild, gentle, and loving Manner; by delivering her Sentiments with the greatest Deference to

his Judgment, and with the utmost Tenderness and Concern for his Health and Estate, which she urged to be very much prejudiced by his Way of living : For, to speak the Truth, she was a very meek and discreet Gentlewoman, and made him a most unfashionably excellent Wife.

Her Persuasions had so much Influence over him, that at Times, indeed, he would form something like a Resolution of amending his Conduct ; but however firm he might seem in his Resolves, he always found them too difficult for him to carry into Execution : For although, as we have before observed, he was a Man of good Understanding ; yet a natural Propensity to former Pleasures and Diversions, and an habitual Exercise therein, had given the Love of them such a Predominancy over his Reason, Judgment, Interest, and all other Affections (except what he bore to his Wife) that it was impossible for him to get the better of an Inclination which he had so long suffered to encrease, and wherein he had so fondly indulged himself. However, he once proceeded so far towards a Reformation of his Conduct, as to determine upon the Sale of his Fox-Hounds, and all his Hunters, excepting one, that
had

had been an old Favourite, and would not fetch much at this Time by the Disposal : Nay, he even sought out a Purchaser; but, unluckily for himself, his Dogs soon after won the Prize at a great Hunting Match, in which the favourite old Horse slipped his Shoulder, so that he was obliged to ride one of his others: These two prevalent Reasons instantly turned the Scale, and induced him not to part with either his Dogs or Horses for the present.

Mr. *Ramble's* Perseverance in his old Course of Life, and the many Inconveniences that attended it, occasioned, at length, so much Vexation to his Lady, as flung her into a Fit of Sicknefs; for which the Physicians in that Country judged no Remedy to be more effectual than the Use of mineral Waters; and accordingly directed, that she should go to *Scarborough*, to take the Benefit of those salutary Springs that Place affords.

Though the Journey thither was not many Miles from their Mansion House; yet she being sensible, that the Extravagancies of the Spaw would ill suit with their present Circumstances, which were, as has been observed, greatly in their De-

clension, it made her hesitate some Time, before she could resolve to follow the Doctors Advice: But while she was deliberating upon the Matter, Mr. *Ramble*, either out of a Motive of Fondness for his Wife, or induced by the pleasing Allurement of being present at the Diversions in that Part of the Country, or very probably from both, took it in his Head, not only to urge his Wife's going to *Scarborough*, according to her Physicians Direction, but also resolved to accompany her thither himself. As his Lady imagined, that the Politeness of the Company there might, perhaps, be a Means of bringing him to relinquish that of his Country-Squires and Sportsmen, she did not long withstand his Request; but first of all obtained a strict Promise from him, that he would not frequent the Gaming-Tables; fearing he might lose what little Money they had raised to defray the Expences of the Journey, and be obliged (which has often been the Case with many that frequent those Sort of Places) to decamp before the Waters could have any Effect. Upon this, she set out with the fewer Apprehensions on that Account; having first concerted Matters together, so as to make the best Appearance in the Place, that their present declining Circumstances would admit of.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Containing an extraordinary Incident in Mr. Ramble's Family, and an Explanation of two Fables for the Benefit of Sportsmen.

AT the Conclusion of our last Chapter, we left Mr. *Ramble* and his Lady just upon the Point of setting out for *Scarborough*, where they soon after arrived; and she received such Benefit from the Waters, as not only to recover her Health in a very short Time, but what was more unexpected, she proved with Child: A Blessing, that as we have before acquainted our Reader, Heaven had not vouchsafed her ever since her Marriage, which was now seven Years ago; and therefore was the more surprizing at this Time, when both she and her Husband had given over all Expectations of it ever happening. Now whether the *Phænomena* of her Impregnation is to be accounted for by any foecund Quality of the Waters, Alteration of Diet, or by her Husband's refraining from his accustomed Intemperancies, or whatever other Cause, must be left to the Determination of the Physicians and Naturalists: Though, no doubt, such of
my

my female Readers as have paid a Visit to the celebrated Springs of *Bath* and *Tunbridge*, purely with a View of attaining the happy Condition, which this Lady now found herself in, will certainly, attribute the Effect to the mineral Liquor: But the Judgment of the Ladies is not always to be relied on in such deep and mysterious Cases.

This Accident was very alarming to Mrs. *Ramble* and her Husband, both of whom could have wished it had happened somewhat earlier; for he now began to open his Eyes, and view his Follies in a glaring Light. Mr. *Ramble* notwithstanding his fair Promises to his Lady, had, unknown to her, played very deep after she left the Rooms, and was taken in; so that on his Return from the Spaw, he was obliged to mortgage the remaining Part of his Estate, to make good the Debts of Honour that he had contracted there: But as she was ignorant of this, it could occasion her no Uneasiness, which, to do him justice, he was very careful of preventing during her Pregnancy.

Mrs. *Ramble's* Teeming-Time being expired, she was safely delivered of a Daughter,

ter, to whom they gave the Name of *Amelia*. And though the Mother was a Gentlewoman by Birth, had received a polite Education, and was of a very tender Constitution; yet, contrary to the Fashion of our present fine Ladies, (many of whom never had the hundredth Part of her Fortune) nothing could prevail on her to forbear suckling her own Infant; till that, in a few Months, finding herself again in the same Condition from which she had been lately released, she was obliged to commit the Child to the Care of a Wet-Nurse.

Mr. *Ramble*, who had formerly given over all Hopes of having any Issue by his Wife, began now to be apprehensive of her breeding too fast; and though he was not displeased at the Encrease of his Family, yet it put him upon serious Thoughts of taking some Measures for defraying of those Expences, which he knew must necessarily attend the Arrival of his new Progeny.

After much Deliberation on this important Point, he found himself obliged, tho' forely against his Will, to come to a full Resolution of retrenching his Expences, and of lopping off all Superfluities, such as
Dogs,

Dogs, Horses, &c. Having freed himself from these Incumbrances (for such they really were, and very heavy ones to him at this Time) their numerous Attendants of Huntsmen, Grooms, Whippers-in, Stable-Boys, &c. being rendered useless, were consequently discharged. Becoming thus dispossessed of his former Enjoyments, the Bottle was now the best Relief he could obtain against the agonizing Thoughts that tormented him on this Occasion; unless we may call playing Three up, or a Gammon for a Shilling, with the Rector of the Parish, any Sort of Relaxation.

As Mr. *Ramble* could not help thinking, that his being in this Manner obliged to part with his Hounds and Hunters, was one of the greatest Misfortunes which ever befel him; so it was likewise adjudged to be such by all the neighbouring Gentlemen: And, perhaps, if the Reader be a Sportsman, or has any Taste for the rural Recreations of the Field, he may be of the same Opinion. But I dare engage, that such of my Readers, who prefer the Exercise of their mental Faculties to that of their corporeal ones, and take more Delight in reading and Reflection than in Field-Sports, will readily agree, that disposing

posing of his Horses, Dogs, &c. was the best Thing Mr. *Ramble* could do, if not the only Method to prevent his sharing *Actæon's* Fate, of being destroyed by his own Hounds.

On perusing that Story in *Ovid*, I have, indeed, often thought the Poet designed it as an allegorical Emblem of the general Destination of a Man who gives himself up to the immoderate Pursuit of beautiful Women, and savage Creatures: Lust soon transforms a Man into a Brute; and the Pleasures of the Chace often end with his being; as *Sandys* has it,

By his ungrateful Dogs in Pieces torn.

Though the Folly or Madness of Country-Squires and other Sportsmen, who neglect all social Duties and Offices of Humanity, for the Pursuit of some poor and unprofitable Animal, is almost inexpressible; yet *Poggius*, the *Florentine*, has exhibited a very lively Description thereof in his Fables; and on which Sir *Roger L'Estrange*, his Commentator, has made some very judicious Reflections; the Substance whereof we shall here present to the Reader, in as few Words as possible.

“ A

" A certain Doctor at *Milan*," says our
 Author, " undertook to cure Madmen,
 " by tying them naked to a Stake, and
 " setting them upright in a nasty Puddle,
 " deeper or shallower according to the
 " Degree of their Distemper; where they
 " were left, till between Hunger and Cold,
 " they were brought to their Wits again.
 " One of his Patients, after fifteen Days
 " soaking, shewing some Signs of Amend-
 " ment, was permitted the Liberty of the
 " House and of the Court-Yard; and as
 " he was standing one Day at the outer
 " Gate, a Falconer came riding by,
 " with his Falcons, his Spaniels, and all
 " his hawking Train about him. Hark
 " you, Sir! says the Madman, a Word
 " with you; and with that he falls
 " to asking what one Thing and t'other
 " was, and at length what they were all
 " good for? The Gentleman told him
 " very civilly, that his Horse he kept for
 " his Sport, his Dogs to spring his Game,
 " and his Hawks to kill it. That's well,
 " says the Madman: And pray, what
 " may all the Game be worth that you kill
 " in a Twelvemonth? Why it may be ten
 " or fifteen Pounds says the other. Ay
 " but, says the Mad-Fellow again: What
 " may all your Hawks, Dogs, and Horses
 " cost

“ cost you in a Year? Fifteen Times as
 “ much perhaps, says the Sportsman. Get
 “ out of the Way then immediately; cries
 “ the Madman, before our Doctor has
 “ sight of you; for if he souced me up to
 “ the Middle in the Pond, he will cer-
 “ tainly put you in up to the Ears, if he
 “ can but set eye on you.”

Upon which Sir *Roger L'Estrange* makes
 this wise Reflection: “ That he, who ea-
 “ gerly pursues any Thing, and gives more
 “ for it than it is worth, is no better than
 “ a Madman. Now the Way, says he, to
 “ make a true Estimate both of the Price
 “ and the Purchase is to set the one against
 “ the other, and so to balance the Ac-
 “ count. When a Man's Head runs riot
 “ upon Hawks, Hounds, Dice, Drabs,
 “ Drinking, and all other Gratifications of
 “ a sensual Appetite, let him consider the
 “ Time, Money, Care, Labour, and Vex-
 “ ation they cost him, and then say to
 “ himself: What have I got to answer all
 “ this Expence, but the loose giddy Fro-
 “ lick of a few mad Hours, attended with
 “ loathsome Diseases, Gouts, Palsies, In-
 “ famy, Beggary, nauseous Qualms, sur-
 “ feiting Satieties, together with the
 “ Anguish of a late and unprofitable
 “ Re-

“ Repentance in the Conclusion?” When it once comes to this, there is no other Way but the Doctor’s Discipline, that is to say, Mortification and Affliction, to bring us to ourselves again ; both which were very sensibly felt by Mr. *Ramble* on this Occasion, though it is much to be feared with little, or no Contrition. However, he was a manifest Instance of the Justness of the foregoing Apologue, and the Verity of its Comment.

I hope this Digression will be excused ; for though it is a Liberty assumed by us Authors, who always think ourselves to be the best Judges both of the Manner and Occasion ; yet I shall seldom indulge myself therein, unless, when I thoroughly conceive it to be (as in the present Instance) both for my Readers Instruction and Emolument.

Vice and Folly are hard to be eradicated from obdurate Minds ; and should these Volumes happen to fall into the Hands of any Fox-Hunters, or rural Squires, it is not to be doubted, but they will readily bestow some hearty
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Execrations on the Author, for decrying their favourite Pastimes; but as he is above the Malice of such unthinking Wretches, so their opprobrious Tongues will not give him any Concern.

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C H A P. IV.

Concerning Dreams, and the Opinion of some Augurs thereupon. The Birth of Will Ramble, and a melancholy Accident that attended it.

Nothing very extraordinary happened during Mrs. *Ramble's* being with Child, besides what is related in the preceding Chapter; excepting a Dream she had, which is too remarkable to be omitted in this Place, though perhaps it may occasion some ignorant, and half-read Critics to open their Mouths on my inserting a Woman's Dream in the Thread of my Narrative: However, they may as well *bay at the Moon*, as *Shakespear* says, as snarl at me on this Account; for, be it known unto all such, that I am authorized in so doing, by the Precedents of all Historians and Biographers, both antient and modern, who have never failed recording such Dreams as had any Connexion with their Narrations. But to proceed: Towards the Close of the eighth Month of Mrs. *Ramble's* Pregnancy, she dreamt one Morning,

ing, that she was taken with strong Labour-Pains, and was at last delivered of a Roe-Buck; which gored its Way through her Side with his Horns, and spurning at her with his hinder Feet, left her almost senseless on the Bed, whilst he leaped through the Chamber-Window, and fled away over the adjacent Hills.

She awoke from this Dream very much frightened; and as it was usual with the Pagans, to consult their Magi, Augurs, and Soothsayers, on the like Occasions, so she immediately rung the Bell for Mrs. Norris, her House-Keeper, (who, though no Sybil, was very well experienced in female Affairs,) and acquainted her with what she had dreamt; and moreover, that as she felt herself in such strong and violent Agony, she was assured her Labour was coming on.

Now although Mrs. *Ramble* was a very sensible Woman, and no ways addicted to the superstitious Follies of many of her Sex, in observing Dreams, Omens, Coffee-Grounds, &c. yet the imaginary Pains which she had felt, left such a strong Impression on her Mind, that, being as yet but hardly awake, she really thought they
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continued upon her: And perhaps the Fright, wherewith she was seized on this Occasion, might cause such extraordinary Emotions in the Child, as to give her strong Reasons for thinking, that its Time of coming into the World was near at hand. Mrs. *Norris*, the House-Keeper, was not quite so much surprized as her Mistress; however, she advised her to send for the Midwife, and some Gossips, by way of Precaution; and accordingly Messengers were instantly dispatched on all Sides, while Mrs. *Norris* hastened to prepare Matters for the expected Labour.

It was not long before all the good Women that were summoned on this Occasion, arrived at Mr. *Ramble's*: These were Mrs. *Nightly*, the Midwife; Mrs. *Eaton*, the Rector's Wife; Mrs. *Spruce*, a neighbouring Gentlewoman; Mother *Gosling*, a Farmer's Wife; Goody *Allwing*, an old Woman that had been at every Groaning in the Parish, for more than half a Century past; and Dame *Crump*, the Nurse.

Mrs. *Ramble* might have called many more Neighbours to her Assistance, who would have came readily; but as she thought these sufficient, and that more Gos-

sips

sips would rather be an Incumbrance than a Help to her, she declined sending for them. The Fable of the Mountain in Labour bringing forth a Mouse, which has occasioned such a Profusion of Wit in the Antients, and gives room for so many trite Applications of the Moderns, that it is grown into a Proverb, did not come up to the present Labour that we are reciting; for if that Groaning-Bout ended in the Production of a Mouse, this terminated in the Delivery of much less: Even of nothing at all. On the Arrival of the aforesaid Guests, Mrs. *Ramble* found that all her real or imaginary Pains had left her. But to recompence her Gossips for their Assiduity, in coming to help her, she had a good Breakfast prepared, over which she entertained them with the Recital of her Dream; there yet remaining such a strong Impression thereof in her Mind, that she rehearsed it as distinctly as it had occurred to her.

Having made an end of her Relation, she waited for the Sentiments of the Company thereon. When Mrs. *Nightly*, the Midwife, observed, ' That as Deer were
' very inoffensive, though wild Creatures,
' she could not perceive how it could fore-
' bode any Ill. Its kicking and goring
VOL. I. C of

‘ of her, indeed, might signify that she
 ‘ would have a difficult Labour ; but then
 ‘ its fleeing away so nimbly over the
 ‘ Hills, shewed, in her Mind, a very safe
 ‘ Delivery.’ Madam *Spruce* said, ‘ as for
 ‘ her Part, she very seldom regarded
 ‘ Dreams, as she believed there was very
 ‘ little Significancy in any of them.’

To this the Farmer’s Wife replied, ‘ That
 ‘ some were true and some were false. For
 ‘ one Night I dreamt, Madam,’ says she,
 ‘ that somebody flung a Stone into my
 ‘ Panniers, as I was going to Market, and
 ‘ broke all my Eggs ; when to be sure, just
 ‘ as I was setting out thither the next
 ‘ Morning, a large Stone lay in the Horse’s
 ‘ Way, over which he fell with me and
 ‘ my Eggs, and smashed every one of them :
 ‘ Nay, its well it was no worse, and
 ‘ that he had not broke my Neck into the
 ‘ Bargain : But I may thank old Mother
 ‘ *Dobson* for that ; it was one of her
 ‘ Witches Tricks, I’ll warrant, because I
 ‘ refused letting her have a Quart of But-
 ‘ termilk the Night before. And then, ano-
 ‘ ther Time, I dreamt,’ continued she, ‘ that
 ‘ I found a Purse of Gold in the Hen-
 ‘ roost ; but on searching the next Morn-
 ‘ ing, I could only find one Egg, which
 ‘ was

‘ was so rotten, that on my taking it up,
 ‘ it broke, and all bedaubed my Fingers.’
 Goody *Allwing* said, ‘ she was positive
 ‘ that Mrs *Ramble*’s Dream betokened she
 ‘ would have a Boy this Time; and that
 ‘ he would prove a great Huntsman, like
 ‘ his Father.’ Dame *Crump*, the Nurse, co-
 incided with the other’s Opinion : Adding,
 ‘ That she knew Gaffer *Gubbins*’s Wife
 ‘ of the Green, to have had just such a
 ‘ nother Dream before she lay-in of her last
 ‘ Boy *Jack* : And you all know, (says she)
 ‘ what a poaching young Dog he is; and
 ‘ that he has been had before Sir *John* once
 ‘ already for Deer-stealing, though his
 ‘ Neck was too short to be stretched at
 ‘ that Time.’

Mrs. *Eaton*, the Rector’s Wife, had hi-
 therto sat as Mute as a Fish : But all the
 rest of the Company having delivered
 their Opinions, she declared her Senti-
 ments in these Words : ‘ Nobody, sure,
 ‘ that has been the least conversant with
 ‘ History, but must be thoroughly per-
 ‘ suaded of the real Significancy of Dreams;
 ‘ — though, as Dame *Gosling* says, all
 ‘ Dreams are not alike in their Portent.—
 ‘ I remember to have read of a great ma-
 ‘ ny Dreams of Women with Child, in

‘ several Authors ; but what *Plutarch* re-
 ‘ lates in the Life of *Alexander the Great*, is
 ‘ very remarkable, as the Dreams of both
 ‘ a Man and his Wife presaged the same
 ‘ Event.’ ‘ Pray Ma’m,’ says Mrs.
Spruce, ‘ who was that Mr. *Plutarch* ? I
 ‘ don’t remember to have ever heard of
 ‘ him ; but I suppose he was one of Mr.
 ‘ *Eaton’s* Profession.’ ‘ No, Madam,’ re-
 plies the other, ‘ he was not a Clergyman,
 ‘ but a famous *Greek* Historian, and an
 ‘ excellent moral Writer.’ ‘ A *Greek* Hi-
 ‘ storian!’ says Mrs. *Spruce*, ‘ O! then I sup-
 ‘ pose he was not a *Christian*!’ ‘ No, Ma-
 ‘ dam,’ says Mrs. *Eaton*, ‘ he had not the
 ‘ Happiness of being enlightened by the
 ‘ Knowledge of the *Gospel* ; yet I assure
 ‘ you, and I have often heard my Husband
 ‘ say, that his moral Writings would be
 ‘ far from doing Discredit to any Pro-
 ‘ fessor of Christianity ; and that it were
 ‘ to be wished we kept up to them in some
 ‘ Points.’

‘ Well,’ says Madam *Spruce*, ‘ but, as he
 ‘ was a Heathen, I shall not give much
 ‘ Credit to what he says, though I ask
 ‘ Pardon for interrupting you in your Sto-
 ‘ ry, and beg that you will proceed.’

He

‘ He relates then,’ says Mrs. *Eaton*, ‘ That
 ‘ *Olympias*, the Mother of *Alexander the*
 ‘ *Great*, dreamt the Night before she was
 ‘ bedded by her Husband, that she was
 ‘ struck by a Thunder-bolt upon the
 ‘ Belly; and the Stroke set her in such a
 ‘ Blaze, that the Flames spread all round
 ‘ about. And not long afterwards *Philip*
 ‘ her Husband dreamt, that he sealed his
 ‘ Wife’s Belly with the Impression of a
 ‘ Lion. Now both these Dreams por-
 ‘ tended, as the Diviners foretold, that the
 ‘ Child which his Wife would conceive,
 ‘ should be remarkable for his Fortitude
 ‘ and Valour : And indeed he proved an
 ‘ invincible Warrior, conquered the *whole*
 ‘ World, and therefore acquired the Name
 ‘ of *Alexander the Great*.’

All the Company were amazed at the
 great Learning of the Rector’s Wife ;
 and M. dam *Spruce* declared, ‘ she would
 ‘ not study so much as Mrs. *Eaton* for the
 ‘ whole Universe, as it would certainly
 ‘ turn her Brain.’ The Breakfast being
 over, and Mrs. *Nightly* assuring them there
 was no Occasion for their staying any
 longer at present, as possibly, notwith-
 standing the Fright of the Dream, Ma-
 dam *Ramble* might continue to go her
 C 3 Time

Time out, they all took Leave and departed to their several Homes ; where they were met by their Neighbours, with open Mouths, enquiring what *Madam* had got ; being all in Expectation of jovial Doings at Mr. *Ramble's*, if his Lady had been delivered of a Son and Heir.

In little more than a Month after this false Alarm, Mrs. *Ramble* really fell into Labour ; and was so exceeding bad, that it was beyond the Power or Skill of the Midwife to deliver her : Therefore a Surgeon who practised Midwifery was sent for in all Haste, from a Town about seven Miles distant. On his Arrival, he found they had neglected fetching him Time enough ; for which he severely reprimanded the Female Midwife, and all her Assistants ; assuring them, that now there was no other Method left him to perform his Art, or give Birth to the Child, than by opening it a Way into the World by Incision, which would probably endanger the Mother's Life, though it might save the Child ; and if he was not suffered to do it, both of them would certainly be lost.

The good Woman very patiently submitted to whatever had the Appearance of giving

giving Birth to the Infant, and Ease to her Pains; and readily agreed to hazard her own Life, for the sake of preserving the Child's. The Doctor soon performed his Operation; the Result of which was the producing a fine Boy: But, notwithstanding his utmost Endeavours, he could only preserve the Mother's Life for about three Days; when, after taking a tender Leave of her Husband, she expired, to the great Grief of all her Family, Neighbours, and Acquaintance.

C H A P. V.

The Manner in which Will Ramble was brought up: With an Account of Mrs. Norris, the House-keeper; and of Mr. Snarl, the Preceptor.

THE Loss of such an excellent Wife was a great Vexation to Mr. *Ramble*; and the more so, as he now found himself solely invested with the Care of two young Children. He interred her in a very handsome Manner, and took Dame *Crump*, his Wife's Nurse, into the House, to bring up the little one; to whom he gave the Name of *William*, at his Wife's last particular Desire, it being that of her own Father, for whose Memory she always retained a very great Respect.

By the extraordinary Care of the aforesaid good old Woman, the Nurse, who bore such a strong Affection to Mrs. *Ramble*, that she loved the Child as though he had been her own, little *Will* soon grew to be a fine healthful sprightly Boy; and at the Age of seven Years, gave several Indications of having an active Genius; but was observed, that he generally applied

plied it to very mischievous Purposes. This Nurse would often declare, that she was certain he would make a fine Man; though this Notion may seem rather to proceed from her Fondness, in desiring to have him such, than from any particular Observations, whereon she could ground her Prognostication. Indeed, the Manner of his Birth was somewhat remarkable: And though it has been observed in History, that Persons who have made their Entrance into the World as *Will* did, have generally signalized themselves very particularly therein afterwards; yet it is not to be imagined, that his Nurse was deep enough read, to found her Conjectures upon any such Historical Relations.

Will's Mother being deceased, and his Father having now no Companion at Home, nor any Person to check or restrain him in the Pursuit of his Pleasures, so he followed them with as much Vigour as ever; excepting that he was not Master of a Pack of Fox-hounds of his own: However, as he kept a couple of good Hunters, he generally was out every Day in the Week, when the Weather permitted, in the Hunting Season, with one or other of the Neighbouring Gentlemen.

When *Will* was about eight Years old, his Father sent for a Schoolmaster, who lived in the next Market Town, and put the Youth under his Care to acquire Learning; who for a fixed Stipend, was to attend on his Pupil three Times a Week, to give him Instructions. This Preceptor of *Will's* was a very crabbed, formal, pedantic old Fellow, who, in his youthful Days, had been Servitor at a College; where, by licking the Trenchers, he had scraped up those few Crumbs of Learning that he was now Master of; and though his Stock of Literature was very small, yet was he as opinionative, and obstinate in his Tenets, as the most dogmatick Philosopher, that ever the School of *Athens* or *Rome* produced. No Wonder then that *Will*, instead of making any Proficiency under such a Tutor, should take a Distaste to Learning. For the abstruse Method which the old Man had in Teaching, together with the Severity of his Temper, were Obstacles sufficient to blunt the brightest Genius. Add to which, that *Will's* Father was so indiscreetly fond, as to make him a Partaker in his rural Diversions, as soon as ever the Youth was able to sit on Horseback: And this Indulgence gave *Will* such a strong Relish for Pleasure,

sure, that little else could obtain his Attention.

As Mr. *Ramble* was generally in Company Abroad, so the Care of his House was left to Mrs. *Norris*; who, as we said before, was a sort of a Housekeeper in the Family even in her Mistress's Time, and was become more fully so since her Decease. She was a Woman of a pretty good Education, being the Daughter of a neighbouring Curate; and after her Father's Death, had married a Shop-keeper; who dying, left her with three Daughters, the two eldest of which she had placed out in Service, and Miss *Dolly*, the youngest, was permitted to live along with her in Mr. *Ramble's* Family.

Though Mrs. *Norris* was endued with good Sense, was an excellent Housewife, and notable OEconomist; yet these Qualifications received great Alloy from a sort of a hot, fiery, masculine Temper, that she was possessed of, and which seldom failed to shew itself on the most slight Provocations. It was under her Tuition that *Amelia*, Will's Sister, became instructed in Reading, and Needle-work; and also had acquired a pretty Hand at Pastry and Confectionary. As for Writing, she was taught that by

Will's Preceptor; between whom and Mrs. *Norris*, there were continual Bickerings about the Manner of educating Children, each of them being very much prejudiced in Favour of their own Method: He was for exercising Severities on the most trivial Occasions; and she, on the contrary, was for bringing Children to a just Sense of their Faults by gentle Admonitions.

Through the Care of Mr. *Snarl*, young *Will* was by this Time got into his *Accidence*; and though his Advances in Learning were but very small for his Years, yet his Progress in Unluckiness was sufficiently great; and he had an excellent Hand at putting Tobacco in the Maids Tea-pot, strewing Salt among their Sugar, and Cow-Itch in their Beds; with many more such arch Tricks, as made all the Servants in the Family very apprehensive of him.

Mr. *Snarl* had one Day set *Will* *Ramble* a Task, that was rather too hard for him to do, or else he was too negligent to take much Pains about it. On his Master's coming, and finding it not performed, he was going to proceed immediately to his usual Discipline of the Rod. Upon which, *Will* pleaded very hard against being whipped; urging, that

that it was the first Exercise he had been set of the Kind, and that he did not know how to do it. This the Boy roared out so loudly, that Mrs. *Norris* heard it ; who came into the Room, and violently scolded at Mr. *Snarl* for his Severity. Whereupon he said to her : ‘ Madam, ‘ I must desire you to withdraw, that I ‘ may perform my Duty without Molesta- ‘ tion.’ ‘ Duty,’ says she ; ‘ can it be your ‘ Duty to correct a Child for a Fault, that ‘ it was impossible he should avoid, unless ‘ you had furnished him with better In- ‘ structions ? No, Sir, if your Duty con- ‘ sists solely in whipping Boys, with- ‘ out distinguishing their Crimes, I do ‘ assure you that you shall do no such Du- ‘ ty here, while I have the Charge of Mr. ‘ *Ramble*’s House and Family. I’ll ac- ‘ quaint him with your cruel Usage of his ‘ Child the Minute he comes Home.’ These last Words so wrought upon the Pedagogue, who was fearful of incurring Mr. *Ramble*’s Displeasure, that he agreed to let *Will* go unpunished this Time, upon a hearty Promise of taking more Care for the future. And he, when his Master was gone, did not fail to return Mrs. *Norris* a great many Thanks, for saving him from that Lashing-bout. This mi-
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nute Circumstance we have thought proper to record in our History; thereby to afford the Reader a small Insight into the different Tempers and Behaviour of the House-keeper, and the Preceptor, as we shall have more Occasion to speak of them hereafter.

CHAP.

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C H A P. VI.

Some farther Account of Mr. Ramble's Family ; in which Love begins to make Appearance.

BEFORE we proceed any further, it will not be unnecessary to give an Account of Mr. *Ramble's* Household ; as perhaps we shall anon have Occasion to speak of some Personages therein, that have not as yet made their Appearance in this History. The Number of Mr. *Ramble's* Domesticks were as follows, viz. First, Mrs. *Norris*, the House-keeper ; secondly, *Betty*, the Chamber-maid ; thirdly, *Esther*, the House-maid ; fourthly, Miss *Dolly*, Mrs. *Norris's* Daughter, a sort of Deputy Chamber-maid, and Assistant House-keeper ; fifthly, *Deborah* the Cook ; sixthly, Mr. *Ramble's* Footman *Ned* ; seventhly, old *Ebenezer*, the Groom ; eighthly, *Jack*, the Stable-boy ; and ninthly and lastly, two Saddle Horses, one Pad, three Greyhounds, two Pointers, one Spaniel, and old *Tib*, Mrs. *Norris's* favourite Cat. These were all the Animals, whether rational or irrational, that Mr. *Ramble* kept under his Roof ; and I chose to croud the last

last Species all together in one Article, that they might not seem to stand in Competition with any of their Fellow-Servants in this History, whatever they may have done in his Esteem. For it is certain that he would sooner have chosen to part with any, or perhaps all his Servants, than with one of his Horses; excepting *Ebenezer*, the Groom that attended them, and Mrs. *Norris*, the House-keeper, who had the Care of his Children: And it is also very much to be questioned, whether Mrs. *Norris* did not give more Preference to old *Tib* the Cat, than to any other Fellow-Servant in the House besides her own Daughter.

This little Society lived in the greatest Harmony together: And as their Master's Company seldom afforded them any Opportunity of endeavouring to rival one another in his Affection; so there was no Jealousy of that Kind, which is so frequent to be met with in other Families, subsisting here. Indeed, when Mr. *Ramble* had Company to dine with him at Home, which was very seldom, there was a sort of an Emulation between the Cook and the House-keeper, who should best please him, by regaling the Palates of his Guests with

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with the Productions of his Kitchen and Confectionary. But, even here, Mrs. *Norris* was always pretty sure of obtaining the Victory, as she had the Care of his Cellars ; for the Flavour and Strength of his Wine and Ale generally made such a deep Impression upon the Intellects of the Company, as quite absorb'd all Ideas or Relish of what they had eaten.

A Scruple may here very possibly occur to my Reader, which is, how Mr. *Ramble* came to keep so many Servants about him, after his Wife's Decease, as he knew himself to be in declining Circumstances. And I must once for all acquaint such scrupulous Reader, that he must not expect in the Course of these Volumes, that I shall pretend to account for every little out-of-the-way Particularity, which may appear in this Narration, as *Tacitus* does in his *Roman* History ; lest, by so doing, I should, like him, produce my own Conjectures, rather than the true Reasons and Motives of such Transactions : However, I believe myself able to account for this Proceeding in Mr. *Ramble* ; as I take the Cause thereof to be his Pride ; which would not permit him to diminish his Servants in Proportion as his Income decreased. He
was

was always a great Lover of sumptuous House-keeping; and, to say the Truth, his Family, large as it was, did not stand him in a quarter of the Money, that it would have cost him to have maintained so many Servants in this Metropolis, or within thirty Miles round about it: For Servants Wages are very low in the North; and even Mrs. *Norris*, the House-keeper, had but six Pounds a Year Salary: Then Provisions are exceeding cheap, and it was these two Circumstances, that enabled him to support such a large Household.

We have before informed the Reader of several of Mrs. *Norris*'s Accomplishments, but omitted to say any Thing of her Person; which had been reckoned handsome in her younger Days, and even now she was what might be called a comely Woman. She had a very agreeable Aspect when she smiled; but when she cloathed her Brow with a Frown, it struck Terror and Dread in the Beholders. Her Stature was of the largest Size; her Temper pretty much addicted to the irascible; and her Port, when she was any ways ruffled, very masculine. As she was a great OEconomist, an excellent Housewife, and very thrifty; so she was reckoned to have saved

Money

Money in her Service, besides what she was possessed of at her Husband's Decease.

The Influence of this Money, together with the personal Charms, which we have just described, obtained her several Lovers; but having met with a very good Husband, at the first Venture, she had too much Sense to run the Risque of a Second, lest his Faults should more than over-balance all the former's good Qualities. Neither could she entertain any great Notion of a Man's Love for a Woman of her Years, that had three Children; though, perhaps, she might be as vain of her Person as any other of her Sex and Age. In a Word, as she saw no View of bettering her present Circumstances, by a Match with any of those Suitors that address'd her, so she kept them all off at Arm's Length.

Mr. *Snarl*, the Schoolmaster, who was a Batchelor, had often eyed her with more than a Month's Mind both to her Gold and her Person; and would really have judged himself very happy in acquiring the Possession of either; but then he had no Relish for her Spirit, which he thought more than sufficient for one of her Sex;
And

And it was the Dread of this Spirit, when rais'd by Anger, that kept all the Servants in awe of her, and prevented Mr. *Snarl* from opening his Mind ; though he had come to the House several Times with a full Resolution of taking an Opportunity to make Love to her. However, he ventured at last to declare his Passion ; but the Manner and Success must be the Subject of another Chapter, as they would extend this to too great a Length.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VII.

The first Consequences of Love entering into Mr. Ramble's Family.

IT happened one Afternoon, when Mr. *Snarl* came to the House to teach, and his Pupil was gone to take a Ride with his Father, that he had the Fortune to find *Amelia* and Mrs. *Norris* at Tea together; and the latter was, at that Time, in such an exceeding good Humour, as to desire him to sit down and partake of their Refreshment. He very readily accepted of the Proffer; and as a round Chat generally accompanies this sort of Entertainment, and that the Smallness of the Company, and the Retiredness in which the Family lived, did not afford much Room for Scandal, so the Discourse turned on the Advantages and Disadvantages of a single Life. Mrs. *Norris* professed much Astonishment, though perhaps a little sarcastical, at Mr. *Snarl*'s living so long a Batchelor; for to say the Truth, he was now upwards of Fifty: Asking him withal, in a very free Manner, 'whether he had never entertained any Thoughts of changing his Condition?' Although she had no Motive for

for proposing such a Question to our Preceptor, besides a Curiosity that is naturally inherent in the Female Sex, and which is sometimes apt to pique itself a little improperly ; yet Mr. *Snarl*, who had ever entertained a very good Opinion of his own Person, immediately conceived that she had some Design in this Interrogation; and accordingly answered, ‘ That he never
 ‘ had abandoned all Thoughts of entering
 ‘ into the State of Matrimony, but was
 ‘ not as yet happy enough to meet with
 ‘ the Woman on whom he could fix his
 ‘ Affection.’ ‘ You must needs be exceeding difficult then in your Choice, Sir, I
 ‘ imagine,’ replied Mrs. *Norris*. ‘ Not that
 ‘ Madam, says he, I am rather afraid I
 ‘ have often been too backward in my
 ‘ Addresies to the Fair Sex, which may
 ‘ have very much contributed to the Procrastination of my Felicity.’ Here the Conversation was interrupted by a Servant entering the Room, to acquaint *Amelia*, that a young Lady in the Neighbourhood was come to see her; when, upon her withdrawing to entertain her Visitor, Mrs. *Norris* went on thus: ‘ Certainly, Mr. *Snarl*,
 ‘ there is a natural Modesty in our Sex,
 ‘ to which your’s ought to pay the strictest
 ‘ Regard; and for which the Men should
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make great Allowance, as it prevents a Woman's appearing too forward in such Cases, however well she may like her Lover: And, indeed, we generally entertain but a very indifferent Opinion of that Man, who professes any Esteem for us, and yet has not Courage enough to make the first Overtures.' 'Whatever Fortitude,' replied Mr. *Snarl*, 'we may be possessed with, yet, when a Woman is in the Case, I believe that most of us find it subdued by some inward Apprehensions, to which we seldom or never give Way at other Times; and which prevents us from expressing ourselves with that Energy and Vigour, as we use on other Occasions. This indeed, Madam, has been my unhappy Case too long: For ever since the first Moment of my being acquainted with you, have I entertained the greatest Love and Esteem for your Person and Accomplishments; yet whatever Torture I have endured for your Sake, it has been all the while preying, like the *Promethean* Vulture, on my Vitals, without my daring, till this Moment, to make you in the least acquainted with my Misery.' Whether Mrs. *Norris* had ever received Intimation of Mr. *Snarl's* Passion for her, by any

any outward Gestures, such as Glances, Leers, Ogles, &c. and therefore had entered into this Manner of Discourse, purposely to sift to the Bottom of it, is impossible for us to declare, as we lie under a great Uncertainty in this Point. But, however, she seemed very much astonished at his pathetic Declaration, and told him, ‘ That she was at a Loss to know ‘ what he meant, by expressing himself to ‘ her in such an unbecoming Manner; ‘ who, since the Loss of her dear Husband, ‘ had never given any of his Sex the least ‘ Encouragement in their Addresses to ‘ her. That his Memory was too precious ever to be forgotten, especially while her Babes were living, who ‘ would never find such a tender Father in ‘ any other Man: And she defied the ‘ whole World to say, that she had ever ‘ any Thoughts of wronging her Children, or had given the least Room, by her ‘ Behaviour, for Lovers to have any Expectations from her: But, perhaps had ‘ she so done, she might have had as many Advances made her as some other ‘ Widows, that she could name; although ‘ they were reckoned younger than herself. ‘ That she was surprized People could ‘ not now-a-days enter into an indiffe-

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‘rent Discourse with any one, without their
 ‘taking Liberties upon it; which she
 ‘thought a great Piece of Unpoliteness,
 ‘and shewed their Breeding.’ She ran
 on with much more to the same Pur-
 pose; but as this Specimen is sufficient
 to shew the Volubility of Speech she was
 Mistress of, we chuse to omit the rest.

The poor *Pedagogue* sat all the while
 with his Mouth wide open, like one Thun-
 der-struck; ’till Mrs. *Norris* rising, rang
 the Bell for the Maid to take away the
 Tea Things, and immediately flung out
 of the Room in a violent Passion, leaving
 the Schoolmaster to his own private Medi-
 tations upon the Matter.

Our Readers may think, perhaps, that
 Mr. *Snarl*’s Declaration was not so very
 abrupt or unmannerly, as to require Mrs.
Norris’s putting herself in such a great
 Ferment; but they must withal consider,
 that she was naturally of a hot Temper,
 and not without a considerable Share of
 Pride, which last occasioned her, (in the
 Phrase of the World, to know how to va-
 lue herself. And as Mr. *Snarl*’s Person, no
 more than his Temper, had not any Thing
 in it very engaging, so his Fortune was less

enticing; for to say the Truth, he was very poor, although he always endeavoured to put the best Side outwards. Therefore his Person, his Temper, his Age, and his Poverty, put all together, had excited in the old House-keeper such a contemptible Idea of him, as flung her beyond all Bounds of Decorum, on hearing his Pretensions to a Woman of her Birth, and so much his Superior both in Reputation and Riches. For though, as we have said before, her Husband was but a *Tradesman*; yet she being a Parson's Daughter, this, together with her Station and Authority in Mr. *Ramble's* Family, gave her such a Title to the being stiled a Gentlewoman, as was impossible for her to relinquish, or forget upon any Occasion; especially on this, wherein she was personally so much concerned.

Mr. *Snarl* had not long been left to muse by himself on the foregoing Scene, which had really given him much Anxiety, before the Housemaid entered with a Beesom in her Hand, acquainting him that her Mistress had sent her to sweep out the Room. Upon this the Preceptor, quite astonished at such Treatment, enquired of her if Master *Billy* was returned: To
which

which she answered, that she did not expect him till Supper-time. Upon this Mr. *Snarl* being very much confounded, immediately took his Leave; though not without muttering to himself some hearty Execrations against Mrs. *Norris*, for putting such an Affront on one of his Profession: But as these were unheard, so they were unregarded; and she remained very well pleased with the Method that she had taken, of letting him know that her Anger was not abated by her Absence.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing another Love Scene in Mr. Ramble's Family, attended with more dangerous Consequences than the former.

THE abrupt Rebuff that Mr. *Snarl* met with in making Love to Mrs. *Norris*, as related in our last Chapter, cured him from ever more attempting it again : And as Time diminished her Anger to him on that Account, so they proceeded to exercise their several Functions with great outward Indifference, though not without some inward Contempt of each other. However, as the Passion of Love in him, and that of Hatred in her, gradually subsided, their frequently seeing each other, brought them at length to converse together very peaceably.

Though Mrs. *Norris*, at her Years, could be no Beauty, yet she carried the Relicks of a good Face ; and as we said before, had a very comely Personage. These were not only sufficient to inspire a Flame in Mr. *Snarl*'s Breast ; but also extended their Influence by exciting Love in the Bosom of another Person, who has
been

been once already mentioned in our History, namely, old *Ebenezer Doughty*; and though we have before only stiled him Groom to Mr. *Ramble*, and characterized him in our 6th Chapter, as being a great Favourite of his Master's; yet in reality he served him both in the Capacity of his Gentleman of the Horse, and Equerry. In the former Station, he had the entire Direction of every Thing relating to Mr. *Ramble's* Stables, and Dominion over all the Underlings that officiated therein; and in the latter Post, he always held his Master's Stirrup whenever he mounted on Horseback, and constantly attended him Abroad: As for Dressing, Watering, and Feeding the Horses, with the other Employments of a Groom, they were generally performed by *Jack*, the Stable-Boy, under his Superintendance.

Ebenezer had been a sprightly Man formerly, and was reputed to have been given to Women in his youthful Days; but having been crossed in Love, by his Sweetheart marrying another, it entirely converted his Passion for the Fair Sex, into one that is generally of a much longer Duration, and differs from the other in two Respects; namely, that it increases with Years,

and that even Age itself is no very material Obstacle to its Gratification. The Reader will easily apprehend that we mean the Love of Money : And this, indeed, from the Time of the above-mentioned Incident, of being crossed in his Amours, had taken such a violent Possession of *Ebenezer's* Heart, and met with so much Indulgence therein, that there were few Methods within his Sphere of Action which he did not put in Practice, in order to satisfy those ardent Desires that were excited in him by Avarice.

As he had been many Years a Servant to Mr. *Ramble*, and his Master was very careless in all manner of OEconomy, it gave *Ebenezer* the fairer Opportunity of making up a good Purse out of those Crumbs that he gathered from the other's Neglect, Profuseness, and Extravagance. He had long borne a secret Affection to Mrs. *Norris*, which he took every Occasion to make her sensible of; such as taking a particular Care to see the one-ey'd *Grey Mare*, that she generally rode upon, well-fed, dressed and litter'd; he was always very punctual in placing on her Side-Saddle with his own Hands, and constantly attended on her at the Time of her mounting on Horseback

to see her safe seated; with several other little incidental Civilities, which must have been perceptible to her, though she had been naturally as well as obstinately blind. To say the Truth, these Testimonies of Affection were too obvious not to be discerned by her; but then this Discernment was so hood-winked by Pride, that it prevented her discovering the true Motive of all *Ebenezer's* Kindnesses; which as she attributed them to arise from a due Regard paid to her superior Influence in the Family, so she condescended to make all the suitable Returns thereto, that her Station admitted of. By this Intercourse of Civilities, *Ebenezer* and she lived in the greatest Harmony together, as they were the oldest Servants in the Family, and the chiefest in their Master's Favour, which gave them great Superiority over the rest in their several Offices; add to which, that they knew each other to be worth a pretty deal of Money.

Though Mrs. *Norris's* Pride hindered her from taking any Notice of *Ebenezer's* Affection; yet the officious Kindnesses we before rehearsed, betrayed it to the other Servants, who could not help discoursing of it among themselves. That *Love and a*
D 4 *Cough*

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Cough cannot be hid, has been a Saying ever since the Days of *Antiphanes*, the Greek Comic Poet, and is now grown into a Proverb. But *Ovid*, who is well known to have been a thorough Master both in the Theory, as well as in the practical Art of Love, compares it more justly to a Fire, of which he says (in his Epistle from *Medea* to *Jason*.)

—— *Quis enim bene celat amorem?
Eminet indicio prodita Flamma suo.*

Which for the Benefit of my *English* Readers, I shall turn thus :

*The Fire of Love who is it e'er conceal'd?
By its own Flame most sure to be reveal'd.*

And again,
—— *Quis enim celaverit Ignem?
Lumine qui semper proditur ipse suo.*
Apud eund. Par. ad Helen.

This was fully verified in old *Ebenezer*, who notwithstanding all his Attempts to smother his Passion, found it too vehement to be suppressed ; so that he was obliged at last to divulge it to Mrs. *Norris* herself, who treated him on this Occasion in much
the

the same Manner, as she had done Mr. *Snarl*. For though *Ebenezer* had by much the Advantage of the former, in Point of Fortune, yet the Haughtiness of Mr. *Ramble's* House-keeper, would not admit her to countenance any Addresses from a Man in *Ebenezer's* Station; nor suffer her to entertain the least Thought of taking a Groom for her Second Husband.

The unfortunate Lover took her Denial of him very much to Heart; and continued Melancholy and Drooping for some Time, without any one, excepting Mrs. *Norris* being able to conjecture the true Cause, which if she knew, she really slighted; for her Pride was too obdurate to be work'd upon by Humility. The rest of the Servants, though they judged *Ebenezer* to have a great Inclination for Mrs. *Norris*, or even to be in Love with her; yet they could not imagine that Love could rise to such a Height, in a Man of his Years, as to occasion him to droop as they had seen him do lately: And for the real Cause, *viz.* Mrs. *Norris* rejecting him, they knew nothing of the Matter, and consequently never once dreamt thereof. However, indeed, it was generally thought in the Neighbourhood, as well as in the Family, that

Ebenezer and the House-keeper would make a good Match together; as they had lived so long Fellow-Servants, were worth Money, and, withal, were both of them well known to have a very particular Affection for it.

Ebenezer continued in his melancholy Way for some Time; when one Morning rising very early, before either his Master or any of the Family were stirring, he saddled Mr. *Ramble's* best Nag, and rode out. After riding two or three Miles, so very much disturbed in his Mind, that he neither knew whither he was going, or which way he went, (but leaving both to the Direction of his Horse) he found himself at the End of a back Lane, that led to Mr. *Ramble's* House. He rode down this Lane, in order to return Home; in which at about half a Mile distant from the House, was a large Pond, where they generally used to water the Horses. On coming to this Place, some sudden Thought struck into his Head; when spurring his Horse, he rode full Gallop up the Bank, on that Side where he knew the Pond to be deepest, and instantly plunged both himself and the Horse from thence into the Water.

As

As it was impossible for the best Horseman to keep his Seat in a Leap from such a Precipice, so it could not be expected that *Ebenezer* should; he fell out of his Saddle, and instantly sunk under Water. The Horse swam to Shore, and being used to the Road, directly galloped Home.

Here *Ebenezer* must have put a Period to his Days, had it not been for a Countryman, that was at Work in the next Field, making a Drain from thence into the Pond; who hearing a Horse come full gallop, it excited his Curiosity to lift up his Head, and looking over the Hedge, he saw both Man and Beast jump into the Water.

As he could not imagine any one mad enough to take such a Leap wilfully, therefore thinking that the Horse had run away with his Rider, he instantly throwed himself over the Hedge, and came to the Side of the Pond, just as *Ebenezer* had rose the third Time from the Bottom, and was going to make his last Descent; when, being a very good Swimmer, he directly leaped in, and catching hold of his Cloaths with one Hand, with the other

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swam

swam with him to Shore ; to which *Ebenezer*, in his Struggling or Plunging, had approached some Yards nearer than was the Place where he first reached the Water ; otherwise it is very probable, that his kind Assistant would not have been able to have got him out.

A Farmer coming by on Horseback, and seeing one Man wet, and almost fainting, dragging another out of the Water, directly quitted his Horse, and ran to help him. These two soon got the Body upon dry Land ; but it being motionless, and not any Signs of Life appearing therein, they were at a Loss what to do farther. However, as both of them knew it to be Mr. *Ramble's* Groom, they, with some Difficulty, laid him across the Horse ; when the Farmer getting up, and the other walking by the Side, and helping to hold him on, they proceeded with *Ebenezer* towards the House.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Containing some farther Occurrences in Mr. Ramble's Family.

THE Farmer and Man had not gone far, in the Manner we have described in the last Chapter, before they met Mr. *Ramble* on Horseback, followed at a Distance by his Son *Will*, his Footman *Ned*, and *Jack* the Stable-boy, on Foot; together with *Deborah* the Cook, and *Esther* the Housemaid crawling after : The Fatness of the former, and natural Slowness of the latter, preventing them from keeping Pace with the others. The whole Family had been excessively alarmed by the Horse's Return without his Rider : For the Beast happening to find the outer Gate open, directly made his Way across the Court-yard to the Stable Door; where he had not stood long, before he was perceived by the Boy, who presently ran in Doors, and acquainted them that *Ebenezer* had rode out that Morning, and that the Horse he went upon was returned Home all over wet, even up to his very Head-stall, and without any Rider.

This

This Report of *Jack's* was first made to the Footman, who instantly flew with it to his Master, just then getting out of Bed. He immediately conjectured, as the Countryman had done, that the Horse had run away with his Rider, and had fallen with him into some Pond, or deep Ditch. But on slipping on his Cloaths, and seeing what a wet Condition the Horse was in, he directly judged, that as there was no Water near the House of a sufficient Depth for the Horse to plunge into, so as to be over Head and Ears, it must be the Watering-pond wherein he and his Rider had fallen. Therefore instantly mounting, and ordering the others, that were now assembled round the Horse, to run thither as fast as they could, he set out on a round Gallop, and presently came up with the Men, that were conducting *Ebenezer's* Body homeward.

The News that the Horse had run away with *Ebenezer*, and had drowned him, spread throughout the House in an Instant; and out rushed the Cook, and the Housemaid, to follow the others as fast as their tardy Steps would admit, in order to see the Event of this Accident. But the two latter had not proceeded much above

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an hundred Yards from the great Gates, before they met all the Company returning home with *Ebenezer's* Body across the Horse: The Sight of which drew Tears from Mrs. *Deborah*, neither could *Esther* forbear accompanying them with some of hers; though rather out of an affected Complaisance to the Tenderness of her Sex than from any Esteem that she had for the Person of *Ebenezer*: But it has been often observed, that one Woman's Tears will presently excite another's, on almost any Occasion. No sooner was the Body brought into the Court-yard, than the whole Family assembled round it; and every Person, excepting Mr. *Ramble* himself, and Mrs. *Norris* the Housekeeper, offered their Tribute of Tears; but, as for those two, the Sorrow of the one, and the Pride of the other, was too great to admit of their paying any such Acknowledgment to *Ebenezer*.

Mr. *Ramble* having observed, that the Motion of the Horse had caused a great deal of Water to pour forth out of *Ebenezer's* Mouth; very judiciously ordered the Farmer to ride three or four Times round the Court-yard, upon a gentle Trot with the Body before him. This had
such

such a good Effect, in making *Ebenezer* discharge more Water, that they presently began to perceive some Signs of Life in him: Whereupon he was immediately put into a warm Bed, and the *Apothecary*, or *Doctor* as he is generally stiled by Curtesy in the Country, was sent for to assist him.

By the Help of the aforesaid *Apothecary*, alias *Doctor*, *Ebenezer* was brought to himself, and recovered his Speech in a few Hours: But having been senseless for so long a Time before, he at first neither knew where he was, nor who were the Persons attending; 'till, by Degrees, recollecting some former Circumstances, he began to utter Prayers and Ejaculations with a very audible Voice; and, upon coming a little more to himself, he desired that *Mr. Eaton*, the Rector, might be sent for. Upon his Arrival, he declared to him the true Circumstances of the whole Affair; and that his being in the Water was not owing to the Horse's running away with him, as had been imagined, but was a voluntary Act of his own: He having set the Horse on a full Gallop, as soon as ever he came within Sight of the Pond, on purpose to leap him into the deepest

deepest Part ; that thereby he might put an End to a Life, which he said was too miserable for him to bear.

The Rector, who had been informed by the Servant that went to fetch him, how *Ebenezer* had narrowly escaped being drowned by his Master's best Horse running away with him, imagined no other than that he wanted to return Thanks for his Preservation ; and therefore was extremely surprized, and shocked at the above Declaration, that the Groom made to him. But much more was the Clergyman astonished, when, upon Enquiry into the Motive of this desperate Action, *Ebenezer* acquainted him that it proceeded from his being slighted by Mrs. *Norris* ; on whom he had, for a considerable Time before, entirely settled his Affection : Adding, withal, that he was certain he could not long survive, unless she condescended to give Ease to his Heart.

Mr. *Eaton* blamed him very much, both for the impious Rashness of the Action, and also for the last Speech that he had uttered ; advising him to beg Forgiveness for the former, and Strength to resist the Devil, that prompted him to the Thoughts
of

of the latter. Also representing to him, how silly and scandalous such a Proceeding must appear, in a Man of his Years, to the Eyes of the whole World, were they to become acquainted with the Truth; which, he said, it was a Shame they should be informed of: And therefore he promised him to conceal it from every Body, upon Condition that he himself would not acquaint any other Person therewith.

This Injunction *Ebenezer* engaged to perform; and by the Apothecary's Assistance, and the Parson's Advice, he soon recovered so well, both in his Body and Senses, that Mr. *Eaton* verily adjudged him to be, as he expressed it, *Mens sana in Corpore sano*; that is, Thoroughly sound both in Body and Mind.

The Method that *Ebenezer* had taken to cure himself of his Love-Fit, together with the Anxiety which continued on his Mind, flung him into a Fever. But what contributed more to his Recovery and Ease, than any of the Doctor's Potions, was the Encouragement that Mr. *Eaton*, the Rector, had given him; who promised, upon the regaining his Health

to him, to intercede for him with Mrs. *Norris* (with whom Mr. *Eaton* was a great Favourite) and endeavour to prevail with her to make him happy.

It was sometime before he could find an Opportunity to perform his Engagement: But neither his acquainting the House-keeper that she had been the Occasion of the Groom's attempting to drown himself, nor the utmost Entreaties that he could use, could persuade her to comply with his Wishes, nor could he prevail over her Obdurateness: So that after keeping *Ebenezer* in suspense, as long as possibly he could, Mr. *Eaton* was obliged, at last, to reveal the Truth to him. Upon this, finding that he began again to relapse into his old melancholic Way; he advised him to cheer up and endeavour to make himself easy, 'till he had tried one other Project in his Behalf, of which he had little Reason to doubt the Success.

The Experiment that Mr. *Eaton* proposed to essay, and which he really put in practice soon after, was communicating the whole Affair to Mr. *Ramble*, in order to engage him to make use of his Authority with Mrs. *Norris*, to bring her to consent to the Match: But even this was so

so far from having Success, that, on the contrary, it rather served to thwart all future Endeavours towards making the Thing practicable. For Mr. *Ramble* being seated over a Bottle, discoursing on the common Topic of Horses and Dogs with some of his Companions; one of them censured him very much for suffering such an old Man, as *Ebenezer*, to ride his best Horse, when he was past managing him: Saying, "That he had been right if he served had Horse and Man too been drowned; which he doubted not would be the Case some Time or other, if he let that old Fellow continue to ride him." In Answer to this, Mr. *Ramble* assured him, that *Ebenezer* was still as good a Horseman as most in the Country, which he offered to lay a Wager of; and being pretty much in his Cups, told the other, "That he knew nothing of the Matter how either his Horse or Groom came into the Water." His Companion persisting in his Opinion, and without reflecting on Mr. *Ramble* for his Obstinacy, the latter immediately revealed the Truth of the whole Affair. This the Reader may depend on was so far from remaining a Secret, that it soon spread not only over the whole Parish, but even throughout

throughout all that Part of the County; and
 caused such an Alarm in Mr. *Ramble's* own
 family, that both *Ebenezer* and Mrs. *Norris*
 became the Jest of every one therein, and
 of the whole Neighbourhood. This,
 consequently, rendered them very uneasy,
 and made both determine to leave the Fa-
 mily, by giving Mr. *Ramble* Warning;
 at an Accident that happened, which we
 all relate in the next Chapter, prevented
 them from following their Resolutions.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

*Containing Scenes of Altercation of various
Kinds: The Humours of a pragmatical
Barber-Surgeon, and other Matters.*

WE acquainted our Reader in the last Chapter, that Mrs. Norris, by slighting the Groom, and his Despair thereupon, had rendered them the Butts of the whole House; the Servants laughing privately at her Pride, and jeering him openly upon his Attempt to drown himself. As neither of them could well bear this Treatment, so there was no other way of avoiding it than by quitting their Places; which *Ebenezer* had Thoughts of bidding Adieu to, in some such Manner as he had once before attempted. But the Watchfulness of the good Rector, together with his pious and indefatigable Documents, prevailed over *Ebenezer's* wicked Inclinations: Who contented himself with acquainting his Master, that as he was not able to bear the Scoffs and Ill-usage of the Servants and Neighbours, that looked on him as a Man more than half possessed with the Devil; so he desired Leave of him

him to quit his Place: And prayed him to provide himself with a Servant in his Room, for he could not endure to lead such a Life any longer.

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Though Mr. *Ramble* was very much vexed, at hearing that his old Servant, for whom he had so great a Value, was determined to forsake him; yet upon taking the rest of his Household to task about it, they denied that he received any ill treatment from their Hands; and imputed the Whole to his late melancholy imaginations, of which they produced some other Instances, whereof indeed he had afforded them many. Therefore, upon comparing Observations and Facts together, Mr. *Ramble* absolutely concluded, that *Ebenezer* had not yet recovered his right senses: And thereupon gave Orders, that the other Servants should have a strict Eye over his Actions; and no Ways disturb his Mind, either by their Expressions or behaviour towards him, upon Pain of losing their Places.

But as Mr. *Ramble* had some Reasons to apprehend, that *Ebenezer's* Uneasiness proceeded more from Mrs. *Norris's* Pride and Contempt of him, than from any Thing

Thing else, so he immediately taxed his Houlekeeper roundly with it: Telling her, That she ought to have shewn more Regard to a Man who had been so many Years in the Family, so long her Fellow-servant, and always courteous and obliging to her; and above all, as she knew, that he himself had always professed a very great Regard for him, as an old and dutiful Servant. And though he had been weak enough to make Love to her in his Dotage; yet that should not have induced her to use him in such a contumelious Manner, as to make his Life uneasy to him; and provoke him to the attempting such a rash Action, as to destroy himself. Mr. *Eaton*, who happened then to be at Breakfast with Mr. *Ramble*, backed his Charge with several pious and learned Arguments both from Scripture and moral Authors; which the Reader might perhaps think too serious for this Place, should we rehearse them: And as it is not only to be hoped, but even also is not at all doubted, that the Reading, of most who shall peruse these Volumes, will furnish them with such Arguments, as the Rector made use of; so we chuse to omit them at present.

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Though Mrs. Norris had a very great Esteem for her Master, and always paid the utmost Regard to his Injunctions; yet on receiving such a sharp Lesson from him, especially before a Witness, together with the Documents of the Rector, whose Texts and Quotations she thought very impertinently and injudiciously applied, on the present Occasion; it so fired her Blood, that she was all over of the same Colour as a Piece of new Scarlet Cloth, which has just received its deepest Dye upon the Tenter Hooks. And, indeed, she very much resembled it not only in Colour, but in Situation; for she may be said to have been upon Tenter-hooks all the Time, that her Master's and the Parson's Harangue had lasted: But the Former's Vociferation, and the Latter's Elocution, being arrived at a Period, she directly made a Return to both in the following Manner.

“ I am exceedingly surprized, Sir,” said she, (directing her Discourse to her Master) “ that you should treat me “ in such an unseemly Way, after the infinite Pains that I have been at, Night “ and Day, in taking Care of your Children and Family, ever since my dear

VOL. I. E “ Mistress's

“ Mistress’s Death. I am certain, poor
 “ dear Gentlewoman, had she been liv-
 “ ing, she would have scorned to have
 “ thrown any Reflexions in my Dish,
 “ on Account of such an old, nasty, odi-
 “ ous Fellow as your Groom: Yes, that
 “ she would, I am sure.” Here the Tears
 gushed out from the two large Sockets
 that were placed in her Head, and inter-
 rupted her Speech for some Moments,
 when she proceeded thus: “ As for your
 “ Preachments, Mr. *Eaton*, you might
 “ very well have spared them at present,
 “ lest you should be at a Loss for their
 “ Help to furnish out a *Sunday’s* Dis-
 “ course in the Pulpit; which I think a
 “ much properer Place for such Lessons,
 “ than a Gentleman’s House; and espe-
 “ cially in Family Affairs, that they no
 “ Ways relate to, nor you have any
 “ Business with : For,”----“ Madam,”
 interrupted the Rector, “ I know the
 “ Duty of my Function, though per-
 “ haps you may not yours: And, surely,
 “ when the Life and Peace of any one of
 “ my Flock is concerned, it behoves me
 “ to do my utmost in his Behalf.” “ Sir,”
 said she, “ you have no Proof, more than
 “ what some slanderous Tongues may af-
 “ ford, that I have ever been the Di-
 “ sturber

" disturber of either *Ebenezer's* Life or Peace;
 " or that it was through any Instigation
 " of mine, that ever he attempted to
 " commit such a rash Action." " The
 " former Position of yours," says Mr.
Eaton, " I can contradict from his own
 " Words; for it was he himself that told
 " me, your scornful Behaviour to him
 " had quite discomposed his Peace of
 " Mind, and had rendered his Life a
 " Burthen to him. And, as to the lat-
 " ter, though indeed it was not through
 " your Instigation that he attempted to
 " make away with himself; yet as your
 " despicable Usage of him was the only
 " Inducement to it, I do not see how you
 " could ever have cleared yourself of the
 " Charge, of being accessary to the Death,
 " had it happened." " You don't see!
 " Sir," says she, " What matters it
 " what you don't see? I'll warrant you
 " other People might perceive plainly,
 " that I had no hand in his making away
 " with himself. What must I, because the
 " old Fellow was foolish enough not to
 " take my Refusal of him for a Husband,
 " must I, therefore, tie myself to lead a
 " Life of Misery with him, to prevent
 " his drowning himself? Not I, truly,
 " for him nor e'er a Man in *England*,
 E 2 " even

“ even had I been previously acquainted
 “ with his Design: Whereas, I knew no-
 “ thing of the Matter till every Body else
 “ heard of it.” “ No, Mrs. *Norris*,”
 said her Master, “ we do not apprehend
 “ that you knew any Thing of his De-
 “ sign; for if you had, I really believe
 “ that you would have been such a good
 “ Woman, as to have taken some Me-
 “ thod, for preventing him putting it in
 “ Execution.” “ Yes really should I,
 “ Sir;” said she, “ any Method, but that
 “ of flinging away myself and Substance,
 “ and my Children’s Fortunes, upon the
 “ old Fool:—But why, Sir, does Mr.
 “ *Eaton* charge me with being accessary to
 “ his Attempt?—I, Sir, that, never
 “ since I lost my dear Husband, ever
 “ gave Encouragement to any Man
 “ breathing, to open his Lips about
 “ Love to me. Had I been as forward
 “ as some other Women, that I could
 “ name, perhaps, I might have had
 “ much better Offers, than any which
 “ your Groom can pretend to make me,
 “ and from Men very much his Superiors:
 “ But, I bless myself for it, no one can
 “ say, that either myself or Daugh-
 “ ters were ever wantonly given. Sir, I
 “ defy the whole World to say, *Black* is

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"*mine Eye.*" The last Words were uttered with a particular Emphasis; and were hardly out of her Lips, when the House-maid entered the Room, acquainting her, that she was wanted immediately in the Kitchen; for that Miss *Dolly* (her Daughter) was in a Fit.---"In a Fit," replies Mrs. *Norris*, "sure it cannot be! It is the first then, that I ever knew her to have in her Life." Upon saying this she hastened away instantly, without staying to take any formal Leave of the Gentlemen in the Parlour.

On Mrs. *Norris's* Arrival in the Kitchen, she found her Daughter seated in a Chair, and supported therein by some of the rest of the Servants; who, by the Application of Hartshorn-drops and Water, had brought her to herself just as her Mother entered: But, on Sight of her, the young Woman immediately swooned away again; and it was not without much Difficulty, that they recovered her the second Time.

Though Mr. *Ramble* and the Rector had been reproving Mrs. *Norris*, as we have shewn before, for her perverse Behaviour to *Ebenezer*, and she had somewhat

provoked Mr. *Eaton* by her Tongue; yet as both of them were too generous to shew any Resentment, so they could not be easy till they knew how her Daughter was: And, that they might not take any of the Servants away from assisting her, they both hastened into the Kitchen, which they entered just as the young Woman had fainted the second Time. On seeing this, Mr. *Ramble* instantly dispatched a Messenger to the next Village, which was a little more than Half a Mile distant, to fetch the *Barber* to bleed her, as he was nearest at hand; the Apothecary living at a Town three Miles off, and being uncertain, at that Time of Day, to be met with at home.

The Messenger made great Haste; and the *Barber*, being a nimble-heel'd Fellow, arrived at the House in about a Quarter of an Hour; by which Time Mrs. *Dolly* was pretty well come to herself, and would fain have refrained from being let Blood: But as her Mother, and the whole Company, persisted that it would be of great Service to her, she at last consented. While the *Barber* was making the Bandage, Mrs. *Norris* gave him a very strict Charge, to be extraordinary careful how he

he performed the Operation upon her Daughter, for that she had a very small Vein: Desiring him not to make too large an Orifice, and to be very cautious of pricking a Tendon or an Artery.

As this *Barber* was pretty skilful in *Phlebotomy*, having been taught that Art by the most famous Surgeon in those Parts, which cost him Two Guineas, so he was no less proud of his Dexterity. He told Mrs. *Norris*, " That he warranted to perform the Operation very safely and expeditiously, if she would only be content to let him proceed quietly." To this the other replied very haughtily, " That sure she might have Leave to caution him, or any one else, when her Child's Life was concerned; for she knew a Gentleman, that had like to have lost his Arm by having an Artery opened instead of a Vein." " You know a Fiddlestick!" replied the *Barber*, " sure he must be a very bungling Artist indeed, that should mistake an Artery for a Vein; especially in this Place, where the Arteries lie so low as hardly to be come at! He might, indeed, prick a Tendon perchance, by the Patient's catching his

E 4

" Arm

" Arm back, or some such Accident----
 " but, even then, he must know nothing
 " of Surgery if he could not remedy it,
 " without putting his Patient's Life
 " in danger. I find, Madam," pro-
 ceeded he, " by your Talk, that you
 " know nothing of *Pblebotomy*; and I see
 " plainly, that if you do not forbear, your
 " Discourse will so terrify your Daughter,
 " that it will be out of the Power of my
 " Art to get a Drop of Blood from her."

Mr. *Ramble* and the Rector persuaded
 Mrs. *Norris* to let the Man proceed with-
 out Interruption. Hereupon he ordered
 the young Woman's Arm to be steadily
 held: Then taking her by the Hand, and
 seeming to feel about to find the Vein, he
 asked her suddenly, if that was her Fan
 which lay upon the Dresser; when, on her
 turning her Head to look, he instantly
 opened the Vein, almost imperceptibly,
 and the Blood directly followed the Lan-
 cet very plentifully.

Here the *Barber* began to exult, saying,
 " Now you see, Madam, how finely it
 " spins out! Did you think that I who
 " have followed the Practice these two
 " seven Years, and blooded Men, Wo-
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“ men, and even Children less than a
 “ Twelve-month old, could not open a
 “ Vein in such a clear-skinned young Wo-
 “ man as your Daughter?”-----“ As for
 “ that,” said Mrs. *Norris*, “ it is certain
 “ the Girl has as fine and clear a Skin as
 “ any in the Country; all my Fears pro-
 “ ceeded from the Smallness of her Vein:
 “ However, pray take enough from her
 “ now you are about it.”---“ Yes, that I
 “ will, I’ll warrant you,” replied the
Barber: And falling into some farther
 Discourse, he turned his Head to see how
 full the Bason was, which the Cook held;
 when he instantly changed Colour, undid
 the Bandage, and, stopping the Blood,
 bound up her Arm.

As the Confusion in his Countenance
 was visible to the whole Company, Mrs.
Norris asked him what was the Matter,
 saying, “ She believed that he had not
 “ taken enough from her Daughter.”----
 “ Not enough, Madam!” says he, “ ay
 “ and too much by a good deal I am
 “ afraid. I wish I had perceived it
 “ sooner----But, when so many People
 “ are talking, and one has not any No-
 “ tice of the Matter.”--“ What Matter,”
 says Mrs. *Norris*, “ I hope, Sir, you have

“ not opened an Artery?”---“ No, Ma-
 “ dam,” said he, “ but I almost wish
 “ that I had not opened a Vein; for I
 “ find by her Blood, that the young Wo-
 “ man is quick with Child; and I am
 “ afraid I have rather taken too much
 “ from her, by not perceiving it sooner:
 “ But I hope it will not endanger the In-
 “ fant’s Life, as I would not have such
 “ an Accident happen, through my
 “ Means, for the whole World.”---On
 hearing this, there was the utmost Confu-
 sion and Amazement in the Kitchen: The
 Girl fell into another Swoon, and the
 Mother flew into a most outrageous Pas-
 sion at the *Barber*; abusing him, and call-
 ing him all the pitiful Dogs she could
 think of:---Not for his Mistake in taking
 too much Blood from her Daughter; but
 for his scandalous Impudence, as she was
 pleased to term it, in raising a Lye upon
 her dear Child. Notwithstanding all this,
 the *Barber* persisted strongly in his Asser-
 tion; declaring, that he would be judged
 by any of the Faculty, upon producing
 the Blood, whether the Matter was not as
 he said. Miss, or rather Mrs. *Dolly*, be-
 ing again recovered from her Swoon, the
 Mother flung down a Shilling to the Ope-
 rator, bidding him get out of the House
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for an opprobrious Villain; with many more hard Names, that she bestowed on him for scandalizing her Daughter; who, upon his Departure, was instantly put to bed, and the whole House remained in the greatest Consternation at this Affair: But as we have not Room enough to eclaircise upon the Matter in this Chapter, we must defer it to the next.

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CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The clearing up of the Incident in the foregoing Chapter; and an Account of another very unexpected one.

THE extraordinary Event, which we have just related, drew almost all Mr. *Ramble's* Family together in the Kitchen, where there remained the greatest Confusion and Difference in Sentiments among them: Some condemning the *Barber* for his pragmatistical Judgment (as they were pleased to term it) and others railing at the young Woman for her Slyness, in conducting the Affair so closely hitherto, as to be impervious to their Discernment. As to Mrs. *Norris*, she withdrew with her Daughter when she was put to bed; and remained yet with her, endeavouring to obtain a true Light into the Affair. Mr. *Ramble*, and the Rector, returned to the Parlour to canvass the Matter together, and wait for more substantial Proofs of the *Barber's* Assertions.

We have as yet taken no further Notice of Miss *Dolly* in our History, than just naming

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naming her. But we shall here inform the Reader, that she was a very brisk, lively, young Woman, of about seventeen Years of Age, having a great deal of her Mother's Fire and Vivacity in her: And being bred up in Mr. *Ramble's* House, and allowed a little too much Liberty, she had acquired rather more Forwardness in her Behaviour than was becoming one of her Sex and early Years: So that however the Mother might pique herself upon her own Chastity; yet it is certain, her Daughter *Dolly* had very little, if one Drop, of the famous *Lucretia's* Blood in her Veins. Indeed her tender Years, together with her being close kept under her Mother's Wing, would hardly, as yet, permit her the Opportunity of making any Trial of that Virtue, excepting with *Ned* the Footman; neither was it so very irresistible, but that he soon found he could make himself Master thereof; leaving withal, certain infallible Tokens of his being so. For she was now near four Months gone with Child by him, when the *Barber* came to bleed her; the primary Occasion of sending for whom we shall proceed to relate as briefly as possible.

While

While Mrs. *Norris* was gone into the Parlour to wait on Mr. *Ramble* (as she usually did at the Time of his Breakfasting, to know what he would please to order for his Dinner) where she staid near an Hour in disputing with him and the Rector, the Servants being also most of them at Breakfast in the Kitchen, there happened to arise a Game of Romps among them, (as was very usual in the Absence of the Housekeeper) wherein there passed some Familiarities and Dalliances, between the aforesaid *Ned* and *Betty* the Chambermaid, which Miss *Dolly* thought very extraordinary and unbecoming; for *Ned* was a very amorous young Spark, and not at all given to Constancy. Seeing these fond Toyings before her Face, gave Miss *Dolly* some Reason to imagine that Matters were carried on farther behind the Curtain, between *Betty* and *Ned*, than what she was aware of; which made her resolve to watch them closely for the future.----- But scarce had this Resolution taken Place in her Mind, than she had an Opportunity of performing it. For this fond Couple were so eager upon their Play, which it seems could not be finished to their Satisfaction in the open Kitchen, that *Betty*

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running into the Buttery, the Footman followed; where they had not been long together, before Miss *Dolly* rushed in, and, to her great Surprize, found them standing behind the Door, kissing very lovingly together, with her Petticoats in a Situation much nearer her Head than her Heels. Surprized and overcome with Grief, Revenge, and Shame, at what she saw, the young Woman ran back into the Kitchen, sat herself down, and instantly fainted away.

As neither the Cook nor any of the other Servants, could judge the Occasion of her being so suddenly overpowered; so they all, excepting *Ned* and his new Mistress, attributed it to some Hurt that she had received in Romping: But the former knew the true Reason, though he was obliged to conceal it; and the latter was not entirely wrong, when she imagined it to proceed from Jealousy. This Opinion she was afterwards confirmed in, when she heard the *Barber* declare that Miss *Dolly* was with Child; which she very readily believed, and as easily guessed who was the Father.

As

As we have thus shewn the Cause of Miss *Dolly*'s falling into a Swoon, we shall now proceed to relate what happened after she was put to bed; where we left her with Mrs. *Norris* attending, and endeavouring to persuade her to reveal the Truth. And, indeed, it was not long before the old Gentlewoman came at the Knowledge of it: For Miss *Dolly* soon confessed, that she had been debauched by the Footman, and believed herself to be with Child by him. Though this News was a great Vexation to Mrs. *Norris*; yet, whether she had before too much exhausted her Spirits, in the Altercations that she had already exchanged that Morning, with her Master and the Rector, and afterwards with the *Barber*; or whether Prudence and Grief overcame her Passion at this Juncture, we cannot absolutely declare: But so it was, that she advised her Daughter to deny the Matter stoutly; and, on that Condition, she undertook to use all proper Methods to conceal her Shame, and prevail with *Ned* to make her his Wife.

In order to this, she first of all revived both her own and her Daughter's Spirits
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by the Help of a Cordial, which she always kept by her ; and then flying into the Parlour, where Mr. *Ramble* and the Rector were smoaking a Pipe together, over a Whet, she told them, “ That she had examined her Daughter very strictly, and all what the *Barber* had said was a false scandalous Lye, and he was a notorious Rogue for abusing her Child in such a Manner.---That the Girl’s Fright had been occasioned by a Rat’s running along, as the Servants were at Play in the Buttery.” Upon this Mr. *Ramble* and his Companion declared, that they were heartily glad to hear it was no worse ; and that telling of Falsities was natural to the Man’s Trade. But Mrs. *Norris*, being a Woman of Judgment, knew that after this Incident, every one would have such an Eye upon her Daughter, as to render it impossible for her long to conceal her Big-belly : And being withal acquainted with the real Occasion of her swooning away ; she was very apprehensive, that her Rival *Betty* might come at the Knowledge of the whole Truth by *Ned*, and divulge it out of Malice. She therefore took the present Opportunity to declare to her Master, “ That as she found every Body
“ in

“ in his House owed her Ill-will, and
 “ were endeavouring to scandalize both
 “ herself and Family, ever since *Ebene-*
 “ *zer's* Attempt to drown himself; that
 “ she and her Daughter were resolved to
 “ quit their Service, and desired Mr.
 “ *Ramble* to provide himself accordingly,
 “ against that Day Month.” Mr. *Ram-*
 “ *ble*, at first, endeavoured all he could to
 “ appease her; but finding it impractica-
 “ ble, said, “ That he was sorry for what
 “ had happened; yet knew not well how
 “ to remedy it, otherwise than by punish-
 “ ing the *Barber* for raising such a Scan-
 “ dal, if Time should prove it to be
 “ false: This he protested he would wil-
 “ lingly undertake at his own Expence,
 “ if it would give her any Satisfaction.
 “ And, as for leaving his House, as he
 “ had always looked upon her more like
 “ a Companion of his deceased Wife's,
 “ than a hired Servant, so he desired no
 “ Warning; but she might be free to go
 “ whenever it suited her Conveniency, or
 “ to stay as long as she thought pro-
 “ per.” Mrs. *Norris* declared, “ That
 “ she scorned to leave any Gentleman's
 “ House (for whom she had so much
 “ Esteem) in an abrupt and indecent
 “ Manner,

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“ Manner; and, therefore, should stay
 “ her Month out: But desired he would
 “ not expect her to tarry a Day longer.”

Notwithstanding this positive Declaration of Mrs. *Norris*, she was prevented from performing her Resolution. For, within a few Days of the Time prefixt, Mr. *Ramble* had the Misfortune to fall from his Horse in Hunting, whereby he dislocated his Shoulder; and the setting of it put him into such Pain as flung him into a Fever, and carried him off in a Week's Time; to the great Grief of his Children, Family, and Neighbourhood. To the former of whom he was a tender and indulgent Parent; to the other a good and compassionate Master; and to the latter a very social and loving Companion.--- Characters that would adorn the Monuments of those who have lived in the most exalted Stations; but we seldom find any such Inscriptions thereon, unless penned by Flattery: Neither were they placed on his Tomb, where they might have stood with Justice.

It happened, very luckily for his Children, that he had Time enough to make his Will, and settle his Affairs before the Delirium,

Delirium, that attended the Fever, took Possession of his Brain; all which he did very much to his own Satisfaction and every one's else. This we must in Sincerity declare, was owing to the timely Persuasions of the good Rector, who constantly attended him in his Illness; and, it is to be hoped, made a better Man of him during that last Week, than he had before been, able to do in the Compass of many Years.

Both *Will Ramble* and *Amelia* being under Age, their Father left them to the Guardianship of *Mr. Merit*, a very worthy Gentleman, and near Neighbour: But as we have brought our History to this Period, we must conclude the first Book, leaving other Particulars for the Reader to be ascertained of in the Remainder.

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WILL RAMBLE.

BOOK II.

Containing a juvenile Excursion of the Libertine, and other extraordinary Adventures.

CHAP. I.

In which Will Ramble and his Sister are introduced to their Guardian.

AFTER the Interment of Mr. Ramble, Will and his Sister Amelia were removed to the House of Mr. Merit, their Guardian, which was not above Half a Dozen Miles from their late Father's:
Here

Here they had handsome Apartments provided for them, and met with an Entertainment suitable to their Birth.

Mr. *Merit* was a Gentleman of a good Estate, and in the Commission of the Peace; endued with great Honour, Humanity, and Virtue, and with such exact Probity, that he might justly be stiled the *Honest Yorkshire Man*, by Way of Distinction. But as good Talents and Endowments are generally attended with some particular Failings; so, notwithstanding these Excellencies, he was a very great *Humourist*: Every Thing must be performed in his own Manner, and according to his Direction; neither would he hardly suffer his Opinion to be disputed in any Point. Though this Peculiarity of Temper, did not totally eclipse his good Qualities; yet, like a small Flaw in a fine-watered Diamond, it depreciated somewhat of the Excellency of his Endowments.

Mr. *Merit* and the late Mr. *Ramble* had been brought up at the same School, where they contracted a peculiar Intimacy together; this, at length, grew into a lasting Friendship, which both endeavoured

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ured to cultivate, when they were ar-
 ived at Years of Maturity. Mr. *Merit*
 had done many Favours for Mr. *Ramble*,
 by supplying him with Money in his Exi-
 gencies ; and even, at last, when he found
 his old School-fellow was obliged to mort-
 gage great Part of his Estate, he lent him
 a considerable Sum upon it at a very easy
 Interest, in order to prevent its falling into
 bad Hands : Neither did he demand the
 Payment of former Arrears, though they
 were very considerable. It was more ow-
 ing to Mr. *Merit*'s Advice, than the Ne-
 cessity of his own Circumstances, that Mr.
Ramble was prevailed upon to dispose of
 his Fox-hounds and Hunters ; which,
 otherwise, he would have upheld, 'till he
 had consumed the last Farthing he was
 worth upon them.

These Acts of Friendship, together
 with his well known and experienced Hu-
 manity and Benevolence, caused Mr.
Ramble to make him his Executor ; and to
 appoint him Guardian over his Children,
 till they should come of Age.

Mr. *Merit* had two Sons and a Daugh-
 ter. For the eldest of his Sons, who was
 now about twenty-one, he had lately pur-
 chased

chased a Cornecy of Dragoons, and the young Gentleman was gone to reside at his Quarters: His youngest Son, who was about Sixteen, and his Daughter, named *Louisa*, that was near Eighteen, remained with him at Home. As the former was designed by his Father for the University, so he had engaged a neighbouring Curate to come and instruct him in *Latin* and *Greek*. This Gentleman was an excellent Scholar, and a very good Man, though his Interest could hardly extend to procure him a Livelihood in the Church: Yet as he was sensible, that this Misfortune was not peculiar to himself alone, but very common to Men of his Profession, who had not the Happiness of having rich Relations, or powerful and benevolent Patrons, so he readily acquiesced with his Lot; and was as content to drudge on in his Duty, for the poor Salary of Forty Pounds a Year, as a rich *Prelate* may be to perform his Function, for three or four Thousand *per Annum*.

Will Ramble, at the Time of his Father's Decease, was about sixteen Years of Age; and his Sister *Amelia* was somewhat above a Twelve-month older. *Will* had made such a small Progress in his Learning under

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der Mr. *Snarl* his Preceptor, that he was as yet arrived no farther than his *Corde-rius*; which, indeed, was his Master's *na plus ultra*.

That the only Son of a Country Gentleman should make no greater Advancement in Literature, especially in a Place where Education is so cheap, that Youth are taught, boarded, and cloathed, for ten Pounds a Year, will seem strange to those who have had the Happiness of being educated at *Winchester* or *Eaton*, or at some of the great Schools in and about this *Metropolis*. But their Surprize will cease on being informed, that Learning is of very little Account in Country Villages; where, as the *Exciseman* is generally the best Scholar in the Parish, the Parson excepted (whose Gown often gives him more Title to Learning, than any Proficiency that he has made therein;) so the *Squire's* Son is commonly the greatest Dunce: Owing generally to Self-pride, and a certain hereditary natural Aversion to Literature in the Father, who scorns that his Son should be a greater Scholar than himself; and also to the kind Indulgence of Madam, the Mother, who had rather her Darling should hazard his Neck in a

Fox-chace, than venture spoiling his Eyes, by poring over *Greek* and *Latin* Authors.

Although such little Regard is paid to Learning in Rural Places; yet, even here, Knowledge and Experience claim some Merit: But then it is that sort of Knowledge and Experience, which every *Petty-fogger* is Master of: I mean, a Knowledge of the common Terms in the Law, and an Experience in the *Quirks* and *Chicanes*, that are so much practised in the Courts. These Talents very often furnish such low *Varlets*, with Means of brow-beating and discomfiting the Justices of *Quorum*, and other sage Magistrates, their Brethren, at a Petty or Quarter Session; and being joined with a natural Assurance, generally procures them great Reputation among the Country-folks, for their Wisdom, Learning, and Abilities.

Though the Reader will find (whenever he has a Mind to make the Enquiry) that what we have here observed, concerning Knowledge and Learning, will hold true in general in all Parts of the Country; yet Mr. *Merit* seems to have been an Exception thereto: For as he had spent his younger

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Days in the Study of the Law, in the *Inner-Temple*, so he was the better qualified to be a Magistrate in his own Country : Had always Discernment sufficient to see into the mean shuffling Tricks of little Attornies and Solicitors; and Courage enough to withstand their Menaces of bringing Actions against him, for doing what he knew to be his Duty.

Will Ramble had not been long under this Gentleman's Care, before he perceived the Neglect that had been committed in his Education; and took proper Methods to remedy it, by giving him in charge to the same worthy Person, who had the Tuition of his youngest Son; And the same Masters that had taught his own Daughter, were also again employed to instruct his Ward, *Amelia*, in *French*, Dancing and Music; that, at her first setting out in the World, she might appear under no Disparagement, for want of a polite Education.

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C H A P. II.

The Settlement of some more of the late Mr. Ramble's Family in the World; and a very unexpected Match among them.

BEFORE we proceed any farther in our History, it will be necessary to look back a little after some of those Personages, whom we have already mentioned, as living at the late Mr. *Ramble's*; and see what became of them after his Decease, when his Family was dissolved.

Now though Mr. *Ramble* was not possessed of much clear Estate, either real or personal, at the Time of his Death; yet, to shew his Affection to his Servants, he left each of them a Suit of Mourning and a Year's Wages: And this Legacy Mr. *Merit*, his Executor, took care very punctually to fulfil. Indeed, Mr. *Ramble* would have bequeathed somewhat more to his two Favourites Mrs. *Norris* and *Ebenezer*; but he knew, that in so doing, he must lessen his Children's Fortune, which his former Extravagancies had already too much curtailed.

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His Servants, on receiving the afore-
 said Legacy, which was paid them, ac-
 cording to Mr. *Ramble's* Will, within a
 Month after his Decease, sought after and
 provided themselves with Places in other
 Families : All but Mrs. *Norris* and *Ebe-*
nezer ; the former of whom, notwith-
 standing her haughty Deportment and
 cruel Usage to the latter, condescended
 at length to make him her Husband. This
 Step she was at last obliged to take, as
 she found herself growing into those Years,
 when Servitude not only becomes irksome
 to the Persons that are to undergo it, but
 they also meet with much Difficulty in
 finding new Places ; as few Masters or
 Mistresses care to take such into their Fa-
 milies, whom Age has rendered nearly
 past their Labour : Besides, she had so
 long reigned as *Governante* in Mr. *Ramble's*
 Family, that she could not endure the
 Thoughts of entering into the Station of
 a Servant in any other. This, and the
 Knowledge of *Ebenezer's* being worth a
 considerable Sum of Money, which joined
 to her own, she thought would settle them
 well in the World together, occasioned her
 to dispense with his Age, and other Ob-
 jections that she had formerly made to
 him,

him, and to take him for her Second; which she the more readily complied with, as she imagined there was little Fear of having any Children by this Venture, to prejudice the Daughters she had by her first Husband. And here we shall take the Opportunity, of letting the Reader into the true Cause of her former Obduracy to *Ebenezer*: A Secret that we have not as yet fully disclosed, and which it is impossible he should have been able to pry into, without the Gift of Divination, even had he been endued with all the Eyes of *Argus*, and the Penetration of his late modern Successor * *Argos Centoculi*; which so well enabled him for a long Series of Time to detect the mysterious Proceedings in the Cabinets of Princes and prime Ministers. It is true, that in our last Book, we attributed her Refusal of *Ebenezer* to Pride; and indeed so it was: But then that Pride was very much elated, if not entirely founded on a Notion, which she had for some Time entertained, that her Master would take her to supply his late Wife's Place: And this Opinion she was the more confirmed in, by the extraordinary

* The assumed fictitious Name of the Writer of a late Paper, called the *Old England Journal*.

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nary Condescension that Mr. *Ramble* always shewed her, and especially since his Wife's Death. But whatever Vanity she might conceive on this Occasion, yet we see no Room to be of her Mind; as we take his civil Deportment to her, to arise from no other Motive, than only a Desire to make her more careful and attentive on his Children, and Family; which, as we have before observed, were almost entirely committed to her Charge. However, if she had any other more prevalent Reasons, whereon to pique herself in this Fancy; yet as his Death cut short her Expectations, so she took *Ebenezer* for her second Spouse, in a little Time after Mr. *Ramble's* Decease: And with their joint Stock he entered into the Business of a Corn-chandler, by which they maintained themselves very handsomely.

Although Mrs. *Norris* settled herself thus well in the World with her new Spouse, yet her Daughter *Dolly* had not such good Success in her Amour with *Ned*, the Footman. For he refusing positively to make her his Wife; and she, as has been before related, being big with Child by him, her Mother sent her quite a-cross the Country, before the Matter

became too open to the Eyes of the World; that there she might repent at Leisure of her former Folly, and, being secured from Ignominy, might learn to retrieve the Slip she had made. In due Time she was delivered of a Girl; and her Mother taking care to have the Child put out to Nurse, sent *Dolly* up to *London* to some of her Acquaintance, to be provided for in Service: Where, as the Matter was a Secret, she claimed the customary Right, pertaining to all young Women that come out of the Country, of passing for a Maid; and which, indeed, may be justly stiled one of the Curtesies of *London*: Here we shall take leave of her at present, in order to proceed with our History.

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C H A P. III.

Containing Will Ramble's Flight from his Guardian.

AT a large Mansion-house somewhat more than three Miles distant from Mr. *Robert Merit's* (Guardian to *Will Ramble* and his Sister *Amelia*) lived Mr. *Josiah Merit* his elder Brother: A Gentleman possessed of a large Estate, but of a very contrary Disposition to Mr. *Robert*; he being of such a sour, harsh, obdurate, and crabbed Temper, that he generally went in the Country under the Denomination of surly old *Jos*. He was married to a Wife many Years younger than himself; and had by her a Daughter, now about the Age of Seventeen. As his Wife was a very likely Woman, and his Daughter extraordinary handsome, it occasioned him to be exceeding fond, and extremely jealous of both of them; so that they led much the same Lives under his Dominion, as the favourite Wife and Daughter of some arbitrary *Turk*, would have done in his *Seraglio* at *Constantinople*: They not being permitted to see any Company, but

what he approved of, nor to visit any where in the Neighbourhood, except at his Brother's House. Mr. *Robert Merit*, on the contrary, indulged his Wife, and his Daughter, *Louisa*, with all Manner of Liberty this Way; and, indeed, he was both an affectionate Husband, and a tender Parent.

Will Ramble, and his Sister *Amelia*, lived very happy under the Care of their Guardian: She soon contracted a peculiar Intimacy with Mr. *Merit's* Daughter, they being nearly of the same Age; and as she daily improved by those Accomplishments which he bestowed on her, she in a short Time began to appear a fine, promising young Lady. Also her Brother, by the Industry of the Clergyman to whose Care his Education was committed, began to make some considerable Progress in the *Classics*; but, nevertheless, there remained in him such a strong hankering after those Sports and Diversions, that he had been accustomed to in his Father's Time, as was impossible to be soon eradicated. This occasioned him to take more Delight in playing at Cards with the Servants, and fighting of Cocks with the Stable-men, whenever he could get among them, than

in his Studies. For though his Genius was sufficiently active and penetrating, yet it wanted the Spur of Inclination; which had been taken off by too early an Indulgence in the Taste of Pleasure: Of which being now, as he thought, too much deprived, it occasioned his living somewhat uneasy under Mr. *Merit's* Jurisdiction.

As the Patrimony that his Father left him was but small, therefore his Guardian very wisely designed to send him to the University, when he had made a sufficient Proficiency in the learned Languages, that there he might apply to what Study should best suit his Inclination; and thereby, be enabled to acquire some Profession to amend his Fortune. And though Mr. *Merit's* youngest Son, *Harry*, who was at home with him, had made such a Progress in Learning as to be fit to set out for the College; yet his Father chose to delay sending him thither a few Months longer, in hopes that *Will Ramble*, by that Time, would be qualified to accompany him in his Studies at the University.

These two Youths were of very contrary Dispositions. *Will Ramble* was of a light, gay, free, airy and open Temper;

And though at these Years he shewed a strong Propensity to some Vices; yet, nevertheless, he was very good humoured and benevolent, and had a great deal of Humanity in him. Whereas *Harry Merit* was of a very grave, surly, morose and close Disposition, much like to his Uncle *Jos*; and of a stiff, proud, fullen Deportment, accompanied with a great deal of Ill-nature and Selfishness in his Temperament: And though he was inwardly as much addicted to Pleasure and Vice as *Will Ramble*, yet had he the Art to conceal it, under the Mask of an affected Sobriety of Life and Manners.

This Difference in their Tempers and Behaviour, occasioned that *Will* and he could seldom or ever agree together, either at their Books or Diversions: However, they took care that none of their Bickerings or Fallings-out, should ever come to Mr. *Merit*'s Ears. But one Day these two being at their Exercises together, and *Will* finding his Task was too difficult for him to manage, desired *Harry Merit* to give him some Assistance: On which, the other surlily asked him, "Whether he
" must always be plagued with helping a
" Dunce?"---As this Invective was some-
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what unjust, *Will* having as good a Genius as *Harry*, though he had not the Advantage of so many Years Tuition under a good Master, so he could not forbear resenting it; and returned *Harry's* Taunt very grossly, by calling him "An ill-natured Dog." This produced more Words; and Patience being a Virtue that neither Side were possessed of, they soon fell to Blows; in which, *Will* had much the Superiority of his Antagonist: But as the Scuffle happened in the Room, *Will*, by giving him an unlucky Fall, flung *Harry* against the Frame of a large Oak-table, and broke his Arm.

Upon this Accident *Harry* roared out so loudly, as soon brought several of the Servants to his Assistance; and also Mr. *Merit* himself, who heard his Cries into the Garden, where he was then walking, and which fronted the Room that the Fray happened in. On his Appearance, and Enquiry into the Cause of such an Outcry, *Harry* very disingenuously acquainted him, as well as he was able to speak, "That he had been abused and insulted by *Will Ramble* for not doing his Task for him; who had flung him with all the Violence he could against the Table,

“ ble, and he believed had broke his
 “ Arm, for he was in grievous Pain, and
 “ could not stir his Fingers.”

Though Mr. *Merit* was a Man of great Gravity, yet on seeing his Favourite Son (for such *Harry* was) lying on the Floor in great Agonies, and hardly able to move, it almost divested him of all Patience: And having a slender Cane in his Hand, he dealt *Will Ramble* two or three Blows with it; which was the first, and indeed, the only Time that ever he struck him: Whereupon *Will* took to his Heels and fled out of the Room.

Mr. *Merit*, after having ordered his Son to be carried to bed by the Servants, and a Surgeon to be sent for, commanded that *Will* should be confined in a Room till his Tutor came to give him due Correction; and that he should neither have Victuals or Drink given him, but according to his Orders: Thinking, very probably, that this might be an effectual Method of cooling that hot Blood in him, which had been the Occasion of his beating and abusing his Son.

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His Commands were soon obeyed; and poor *Will* was locked up in a little adjacent Room. But having formerly been indulged with so much Liberty, his Spirit could very ill brook his present Confinement; and as he was also in much dread of the Chastisement, that he expected to receive from his Tutor's Hands, therefore he began to think of Means how to free himself from both.

The Place of Durance whereunto Mr. *Merit* had committed him, being but up one Pair of Stairs, and fronting the Garden, when he perceived all was still, he flung open the Casement; and laying his Hands on the Window-frame, dropped down from thence on a Bed of soft Mould, that composed the Border of the Walk underneath; and then, crossing the Garden, he got over a back Door, that opened into a Lane, from whence he made his Escape into a large adjacent Thicket, unperceived by any one.

Here *Will* rested a small Time, to recover himself from the Terror he had been in of being detected in his Flight; and summoned a Council of his Thoughts
to

His

to advise whether it was best to return back again, or to proceed further. Inclination strongly advised the former; as being now his natural Home, and the only Place of Refuge, that he could seek from the Dangers which he might incur abroad: But Fear and Shame urging the Pain and Ignominy of the severe Chastisement, that he must certainly expect, on his Return thither, soon brought *Will* over to their Side, and he resolved to venture his Safety upon his Flight. Thinking, therefore, that his present Situation was not so secure from Discovery as he could wish, on account of its being so near the Garden, through which he had escaped, and that the Place of his Retreat would be obvious to the Family upon searching for him; he instantly made his Way to a large Heath, about a Mile further, and there concealed himself in a thick Cluster of Furze-bushes: Here we shall leave him, as yet, till we have shewn how Matters went at Home in his Absence.

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C H A P. IV.

The Arrival of the Surgeon, and other Matters that occurred after Will's Flight; with the Search that was made for him.

IT was about Noon-time when the Accident happened, that we recounted in the preceeding Chapter; and the Tutor making it very late before his Arrival (being obliged, as it was a Church-day, first to perform his Function there) the Surgeon, though he came seven Miles, got to Mr. *Merit's* before him.

On viewing *Harry's* Arm, he presently found that it was broke nearly in the Middle, between the Elbow and Shoulder; and immediately applied himself to the setting of it: This he performed with great Dexterity in a short Time, though not without putting his Patient to some unavoidable Pain: After which, he took away some Blood from him, to keep him out of any Danger of a Fever, from the Anguish of his broken Bone.

While

While these Operations were performing the Tutor came in, and was exceedingly alarmed at the Accident; but advised Mr. *Merit* not to afflict himself too much thereupon, as from the celebrated Skill of the Surgeon, and the Youth of his Son, he was in great Hopes that the fractured Bone would soon join again. And when the Surgeon had compleated his Business, Mr. *Merit* invited him and the Curate to take a Glass of Wine, by Way of Refreshment, himself bearing them Company.

While these three Gentlemen were drinking their Wine, and talking of the Accident that had happened, the Discourse turned upon what Sort of Punishment should be inflicted on *Will* for being the Cause of this Disaster: When the Surgeon averred, that if any Lad had served a Son of his in such a Manner, he would have launced his Guts out.—Both the other Gentlemen were extremely surprized at the Cruelty, and Harshness, of this Expression:—But they did not consider, that though the Surgeon was a Man of that Ability in his Profession, yet he was great of those flinty-hearted Gentlemen, whom

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whom Nature, or Habit has rendered so insensible of the Misery, to which their Practice oftentimes obliges them to put their Fellow-creatures, that thereby they have justly acquired the Name of *Butcher-Surgeons*; to distinguish them from others of their Profession, who are more tender-hearted and compassionate.

The Curate, though he was a very mild Man, declared that *Will* deserved to be sharply chastised, and obliged afterwards to ask Mr. *Merit's* Son Pardon, for the Injury he had done him; and also that he should be kept closely confined to his Book, during the whole Time that the other was detained from his Learning, by his broken Arm.—But the good Man pronounced this Sentence, on hearing the Matter represented in the worst and falsest Light, that it could possibly be placed in; which was, that *Will* had been the Aggressor, and insulted the other for not doing his Task for him.

Mr. *Merit's* Anger against *Will* was by this Time pretty much abated: For to say the Truth, he was very little under the Influence of that Passion; and whenever overtaken by it, the Continuance was but short.

short. He, therefore readily acquiesced with the Curate in the latter Part of his Sentence, but would by no Means suffer the former to be executed:—In lieu whereof he directed that *Will* should have proper Correction with a Rod, and afterwards be admonished very strongly of the fatal Consequences generally attending such rash and unbecoming Actions: Saying withal, “ That as he was the Son of a deceased Friend, and left to his Care; he “ thought himself in Duty bound to use “ less Severity to him on this Occasion, “ than if he had been one of his own “ Children.” Although he looked upon *Will* as thoroughly convicted on his Son’s Evidence, whom he had never yet found in an Untruth, still he was willing to hear what he had to say for himself, before this Sentence was put in Execution; out of Hopes that his Penitence, or some other Plea, might occasion it to be mitigated. For he thought even the depriving him of his Liberty was rather too severe; and that confining him to his Books for so long a Time together, might create in him an entire Aversion to study: Wherefore he sent one of his Servants to fetch *Will* before him.

The Servant soon returned, with an Account that *Will* was not in the Room where he had been confined; but as he found the Casement wide open, he imagined that he had leaped out that Way, and had hid himself. On this Report the Garden was ordered to be searched for him, and afterwards the House, Stables, &c. But all in vain, for *William* was not to be found in any of them: Only on a second Examination of the Garden, his Footsteps were traced from the aforesaid Room Window, across some Beds (for he did not stand to pick his Way) to the Garden Door, upon which he had left some of the Mould that had stuck to his Feet in climbing over.

Though they could track him no farther by his Foot-steps, yet this gave them a strong Suspicion of his being fled into the adjacent Thicket in the Lane; therefore they searched it through and through, till Night obliged them to give over seeking for him. In the mean while, the Surgeon, having finished his Business for that Time, and the Curate finding that *Will* had escaped the Birch, which

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which he had ordered the Gardiner to provide, both took Leave of Mr. Merrit; who remained very disconsolate, on the Accident that had happened to his Son, and much vexed, that his Servants were not able to find *Will Ramble*.

He was ordered to be searched for, and afterwards the House Stables, &c. But all in vain, for Will was not to be found in any of them: Only on a second Examination of the Garden, his Footsteps were traced from the stoneland down Window, across some Hedges (for he did not stand to pick his Way) to the Garden Door, upon which he had left a mark of the Moon, that led back to his room in climbing over.

Though they could trace him no farther by his Foot Steps, yet this gave them strong Suspicion of his being fled into the adjacent Forest in the Night; there they searched in through and through, but were obliged them to give over looking for him. In the mean while, the Surgeon, having finished his Business for that Time, and the Curate, finding that Will had escaped the Hunt, which

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the Chace after Will; and the finding another Person, of a different Sex, instead of him.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Merit had given Orders to his Servants, the Evening before, to come to his Chamber and let him know whenever they discovered *Will*; or that he came to the Door; yet on hearing no Tidings of him all the Night long, he enjoyed but very little Rest. Therefore, rising early the next Morning, he ordered the House, Gardens, Stables and Thicket, to be searched over again: Which was executed with as little Success as the Time before.

Various were now the Conjectures of the Family upon *Will's* absconding: Most of them imagined that he was fled to some of his late Father's Tenants, and had there found Shelter among them; while others, who knew his Temper, and that he was hot, fiery, and very passionate, conceived a much worse Opinion of his Elopement; and really imagined that

that he had either drowned himself in some of the Canals, in the Gardens, or had hanged himself on some Tree in the Thicket, or in the adjacent Fields.

As both *Louisa* and his Sister *Amelia* were very much in dread of the former Accident, so they strongly solicited Mr. *Merit* that all the Ponds and Canals might be dragged and searched; which he was upon the Point of ordering to be done, at their Entreaties, when a Thought struck into his Mind of making a previous Trial another Way: For he could not conceive, that it was possible for such a wicked Act to enter into the Head of any rational Creature in their Senses, and especially into that of such a Youth as *Will Ramble*.

Mr. *Merit*, in his younger Days, before he betook himself to the Study of the Law, had been somewhat of a Sportsman; and even at that Time, and since he had been in the Commission of the Peace, had known several Instances of Thieves and Robbers having been traced and discovered by the Scent of Blood-hounds: A Practice very common in the Northern Parts, as well as in most Coun-

ties

ies in *England*. But as he had no such Hounds, he keeping only a Couple of Pointers and a Spaniel, for the Diversion of Shooting, wherewith he sometimes recreated himself, so he was obliged to send to his Brother *Josiah's* for them: Who not only lent him a Couple of staunch Blood-hounds, but also accompanied them, in hopes they were going in quest of some Thief or Murderer: — A Chace which delighted him as much, if not more, than that of a Stag or Fox.

On the Arrival of these Hounds and their Master, they were directly laid on to *Will's* Track in the Garden; from whence they trailed him, as it is termed, to the Thicket; and from thence to the Furze-Bushes, where *Will* had passed the Night, under the spacious Coverture of the wide Heavens: Mr. *Merit*, himself, his Brother *Josiah*, and his Huntsman, together with several of their Servants accompanying the Dogs.

It being a very fine scenting Morning, and the Hounds having more Sagacity in this Exercise than their human Attendants, they trailed *Will* very briskly by
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his † *Slots* hitherto ; and when they were come up among the Furze-Bushes, some of his Hunters discover'd he had been there lately by his † *Fewmets* ; which he had left not only on the Ground, but also upon a Piece of Paper, whereon there was some Writing, that was soon discovered to be *Will's* Hand. For having a Call of Necessity in the Morning, before he unkenel'd, he had been obliged to make use of the said Paper, out of a Point of Cleanliness, as he had no other about him ; and had left it there with a fresh Endorsement, which he little imagined would have been of any Significancy to his Pursuers.

As they were very well assured by the aforesaid gilt Token, that they were in the right Trail for their Game, the Dogs were encouraged, and put on afresh ; whereupon they followed him with a full Scent over plowed Fields, and other Lands, for about five Miles, 'till they came to a large Moor, across which ran a small River. Here they traced *Will* to the Ford, where they found themselves at a Loss for some Time ; 'till getting the Hounds over to the other Side,

† Terms of the Chace for the Tread and Dung of Deer

they set them on to a fresh Trail, which they pursued till they came to a Road; when the Blood-hounds stopt short, and both Men and Dogs were entirely cast out.

They tried up and down the Road, and all other Ways, to recover the Scent; but the Blood-hounds being entirely at a Fault, they determined to cross the Moor, which was about three Miles over, to a Village that lay on the other Side, and there to make Enquiry after *Will*: But on their Arrival, they could not hear any Tidings of him; wherefore, after getting some Refreshment, they returned back again in their Way home.

During this, the whole Family were in the greatest Concern, on Account of the lost Youth: For though he was very arch and unlucky, he was exceedingly well-beloved among them; excepting by *Harry Merit*, who laid all this Time in his Bed, heartily wishing he might never return again. But as *Will* was entirely in the Affection of *Amelia* and *Louisa*, their Uneasiness on his Account, was greater than that of any of the others. Therefore, they agreed to adopt their usual Morning's Ride, to search after him, among the late Mr. *Ramble's* Te-

nants, where they imagined he lay concealed ; and taking a Servant with them, they accordingly set out, after a slight Breakfast, to Mr. *Ramble's* Estate, in quest of *William*.

They had not rode above four Miles from Home, when, going along a Bridle Way, that led through a large Wood, they were surprized at hearing a human Voice, making great Moan. They immediately stopt their Horses, and lighting, fastened them to the Trees ; when they rushed into the Wood, the Servant going foremost ; imagining that now they had found *Will*, from whom they took those dismal Lamentations to proceed.

But how great was their Astonishment, when advancing about five Hundred Yards, they perceived—not *Will*—but a young Woman tied down to the Trunk of a Tree, that had lately been felled : She was naked all but her Shift, and in struggling to unloose the Cords, had deeply cut and tore her Flesh in a miserable Manner.

At the Sight of this Object, the two Ladies immediately gave a loud Skream ; and knew not whether to go forward, or
return

return to their Horses : For the Posture that young Woman was laid in, being tied down on her Back, and she trying to disengage herself, had rendered her such a Spectacle, as was not very agreeable to the Modesty of two Virgins, with a Man in their Company. On recovering themselves a little from their Suprize, they ordered the Servant to fetch his Great Coat, which was fasten'd behind his Saddle ; and then directing him to stand at a Distance, they flung it over the young Woman ; and *Amelia* taking a Penknife out of her Pocket, cut the Cords, and set the Damsel at Liberty.

The poor Creature was so faint with struggling to get free, having lain a long while in this dismal Posture, that on their releasing her from the Cords, she fell to the Ground ; when being overjoyed at the meeting with such unexpected Assistance, and finding herself again at Liberty, it occasioned her instantly to faint away ; but *Louisa* having a little Case of Smelling Bottles, of Hartshorn Drops and Salts in her Pocket, she soon brought her to herself again. The two Ladies then helped her on with the Footman's Great Coat ; but finding she was scarce able to speak, much less

to stand or go, they dispatched the Servant to a small Brook, that ran by the Wood-side, for some Water; which he was obliged to fetch in his Hat, having no other hollow Conveniency in Readiness.

When they had brought the young Woman to her Speech a little, they asked her who she was, and how she came to be in such a terrible Condition? To which she answered, her Name was *Watkins*; that she was the Daughter-in-Law of a Gentleman in *Lancashire*; and travelling across the Country to *Hull*, with a Servant who was to conduct her thither, she had been robbed by him, and afterwards stripped and bound in the Manner they saw.

Upon hearing this, and as the young Ladies had no Room to doubt the Truth of what she said, they directed her to get upon the Trunk of the Tree to which she had been bound, and from thence they lifted her on Horseback behind their Servant: Then quitting the Pursuit of *Will Ramble*, they conducted her safe Home with them; and after some Refreshments they had her put into a warm Bed, where they left her to compose herself. Mr. *Merit*, and the rest of the Company that had been in

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Chace of *Will Ramble*, returned soon after ; and on his Daughter's acquainting him with the Manner of their finding the young Woman bound in the Wood, he was exceedingly pleased with the Care they had taken of her ; and highly applauded them for the Humanity they had shewn on this Occasion. Now although Mr. *Merit* was very anxious to hear from her own Mouth how she came to be in such dismal Circumstances, as he had Hopes, that by a speedy Pursuit the Villains that had robbed her, might be overtaken ; yet on his being informed that she was gone to Rest, his good Nature would not suffer her to be disturbed.

He was pretty much fatigued with his Chace, and not a little chagrined at his Disappointment, in not overtaking his Ward : But though Mr. *Merit*, and his Attendants, met with such ill Success. yet it shall not deter us from undertaking the like Pursuit ; as we think it high Time to enquire after *Will Ramble*, which we shall proceed to do in the next Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Will Ramble's Progress into Nottinghamshire.

WE left poor *Will* concealed on a Heath among some Furze-bushes, where he took up his Lodging for that Night; and from thence made his Way the next Morning to the aforefaid *Moor*, where the Dogs were flung out in the Pursuit of him: For as *Will* had been used to go a hunting with his Father, he knew the Course of the Country very well.

Here he forded the River, that we mentioned in our last Chapter, and walked, or rather ran, 'till he came to the great Road which leads to *Kingston upon Hull*; where 'spying a Stage-coach at a Distance, he sat down and rested himself 'till it came up to him: When, there being but one Passenger therein, he bargained with the Coachman to carry him to the next Town, which was *Beverley*, from whence he was then about seven Miles distant. On his Arrival there, he discharged

discharged his Coach. For having had a Crown given him by Mr. *Merit* for Pocket-money, the Day before his Elopement, he had turned it to so much Advantage at Cards, that Night, with Mr. *Harry Merit* as to win Half a Guinea, from him, besides a Crown more from some of the Servants; so that he was pretty well provided with Cash for his Journey. And, perhaps, the losing that Half-guinea, might put *Harry* in such an Ill-humour as induced him not to oblige *Will*, the next Morning, in the Favour he requested of him; and which occasioned their falling out: For *Harry* was of a very sordid, covetous Temper.

When *Will* arrived at *Beverley*, where the Coach baited, he got some Refreshment; and thinking it not safe to keep the main Road any longer, he quitted it on leaving this Town, and proceeded on Foot across the Country several Miles together; 'till coming to a *Knoll*, or little Hill, he sat down to rest himself, and consider what Course to take. While he was sitting here, a Lad, who was keeping of Sheep upon the *Knoll*, came up to him; and seeing *Will* very well dressed, begged of him for a Penny to buy some Bread and

Chiefe : *Will* who was of a very generous Spirit, instantly put his Hand in his Pocket ; and pulling out three Half-pence, which was all the Copper he had, gave it to the Lad, for which he was very thankful.

As from this little Ascent he could see a good Way round about him, he took the Opportunity of enquiring of the Lad, the Names of such Towns and Villages as he perceived at a Distance, and the Ways that lead to them : He also asked him, who he lived with, and what Wages he had. To whom the Lad answered : That “ he lived with Farmer *Stubble* ; and had “ Three-pence a Day, and a *Sunday*’s Dinner, “ for looking after his Sheep.” While they were discoursing together, a sudden thought struck into *Will*’s Head ; which was, that in case he should be followed by any of *Mr. Merit*’s Family, his Dress would certainly betray him to his Pursuers : Therefore, to prevent such a Discovery, he immediately proposed changing of Cloaths with the Lad. *Will* had on at that Time a fine Cloath Coat, with Brass Buttons, and a red Waistcoat edged with Silver Twist ; wherefore the Proposal of exchanging them for a coarse, ragged, Drab Coat,

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Coat, and an old tattered Flannel Waistcoat, very much astonished the Lad; and made him think that *Will* had not come fairly by that fine Apparel, (for such it was in his Eye) which he was so ready to part with for much worse. Although the Lad was poor, yet he was honest: But upon *Will's* offering him a Shilling into the Bargain, which by the Way, was almost half as much as all the Cloaths on the other's Back were worth; and the Lad knowing the Value of Money, better than that of *Will's* Apparel, stood no longer in his own Light, but instantly consented to the Barter. Upon this, *Will* delivered his Coat, Waistcoat, and Hat to the Lad, and put on his old ones. As for Breeches, *Will's* being of Buckskin, and the Lad's very ragged, he chose to keep his own; so taking Leave of his Companion, he trudged on across the Country, and in a short Time arrived upon the Borders of *Nottinghamshire*.

As it happened, *Will Ramble* was pretty right in his Notion of exchanging Cloaths, to prevent his being discover'd; for Mr. *Merit*, his Guardian, on hearing no Tidings of him, dispatched Messengers to

all the Towns and Villages that were round about, with a Description of his Person and Dress in Writing, and a Reward for bringing him Home ; which he ordered them to affix up at proper Places, and sent one, among the rest, after him by a Servant to *Beverley*: For Mr. Merit knowing *Will* to be of a wild Inclination, was afraid that he should light in bad Company, or some other Accident should befall him.

On the Servant's coming to *Beverley*, he soon got Intelligence of the young Gentleman's Arrival there, in the *Hull* Coach ; but he could make no farther Discovery of his Progress : He staid there part of that Day, and sent Men in search for him to all the adjacent Villages : Nevertheless, as *Will* had very carefully avoided going through any of them, but kept to the open Fields and Heaths for many Miles, so most of those employed, returned without any News of him. However, one Country Fellow, who went upon this Occasion, happened to be the Brother of the Lad with whom *Will* had exchanged Apparel ; and meeting with a Farmer's Servant, who lived in that Neighbourhood, and was coming on Horseback to *Beverley*, about some Business of his Master's

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ster's; he took the Opportunity of asking
 how all did at Farmer *Stubley's*, and how
 his Brother was? To which the other
 directly answered, "What, *Jack*? Oh!
 "*Jack's* grown a Gentleman." "A Gen-
 "tleman," says his Brother "I know he
 "was always a saucy Dog; but what has
 "he done now?" "Done," replied the o-
 ther, "Why done, no Harm fackins as
 "I know of; but has only got himself
 "some fine Cloaths, and goes like a
 "Lord." "What Cloaths, replied the
 "Brother? how did he come by them?
 "Oh! that I know not neither, says
 "the Man; but he has gotten himself a
 "good Coat and Hat, and fine laced red
 "Jacket; he says that some young Gen-
 "tleman has given them him for his old
 "one's; but that is a likely Story truly!
 "'Tis well if he han't stolen 'em, and so
 "thinks his *Measter* and *Deam*." "No,
 "no, says the Lad's Brother, tho'f he's
 "unlucky, I believe him honest." He
 then parted with the Man, and went
 on to the next Village whither he
 was sent. But in going thither, and
 musing on his Brother's fine Cloaths,
 it came into his Head, that these very
 Cloaths, which made his Brother so much
 talked of, must have been those the young
 Gentleman went away in: And upon se-
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cond Thoughts, for he was none of your very quick witted Fellows, that can compare their Ideas readily together as they occur ; therefore, upon second Thoughts I say, he recollected that *Jack's* new Dress, answer'd exactly to the Description given him of the young Gentleman's.

Having, therefore, made a vain Enquiry at the next Village, he returned at Night to the Inn where Mr. *Merit's* Servant was, and related to him the Account he had received from the Man: Adding, withal, that as his Brother *Jack* was a very honest Lad, he didn't see how he could come by 'em, unless the Gentleman had given 'em to him.

The Servant conjectured immediately, upon hearing this Story, that the Cloaths must be the very same which *Will Ramble* had on, when he left Mr. *Merit's*. Therefore he paid the Man for what he had employed him in, and also hired him and a Horse, to shew him the Way to the Farmer's, where *Jack* lived ; but as it was Night, and they must be obliged to cross a very wild Part of the Country, the Journey was deferred till the next Morning.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*Further Account of Will Ramble's Progress,
and the Pursuit after him.*

MR. *Merit's* Servant, and the Man, set out together early the Day following, and came to the Farm-house where *Jack* lived. Here the Relation was confirmed from his Dame, that *Jack* had got some fine Cloaths given him by a young gentleman, and a Shilling to boot, for the exchange of his old ones : And, upon the Lad's being sent for, Mr. *Merit's* Servant not only knew the Cloaths again ; but also found by *Jack's* Description, that he had them from *Will Ramble* himself.

Therefore, enquiring of the Lad which Way *Will* took, he and the Lad's Brother set out to another Village, about ten Miles farther in the Pursuit of him : But as *Will* had turned off to the Right, before he came to that Village, so they could hear nothing of him in that Place.

As Mr. *Merit* had given all those whom he sent out on this Occasion, a strict Charge

Charge, if they heard any Thing of *Will*, to go on till they came up with him; and the Servant finding he could trace him no farther, thought it was the best Way to carry *Jack* back with him to his Master's; that Mr. *Merit* might be satisfied from the Lad's own Mouth, of what he knew concerning *Will*. Therefore, mounting *Jack* behind his Brother, he conducted them both home with him.

During this Time, *Will* had made such Expedition, that (though he was obliged to go a considerable Way about to cross some Rivers, which lay in his Journey) that in three Days from his setting out, he had penetrated some Way into *Nottinghamshire*. There he rested himself a little; and hearing that on the Morrow, which was *Michaelmas-Day*, there was to be a Fair at a Town a few Miles distant from where he was, he went thither to see some Diversion.

The Coat which he had purchased of *Jack* being now almost torn to Pieces by the Briars, in *Will's* going through Hedges with it, made him resolve to buy another if he could meet with one at the Fair; which he accordingly did, and suited himself

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with a tolerable good Second-Hand one, for about three or four Shillings.

By this Time *Will's* Money grew pretty low ; therefore he began to think of getting into some Way of Business, to procure himself somewhat to subsist on ; for he was fully resolved not to return home again. He had now taken up his Lodging with an old Woman, that dwelt in a little Cottage, on the back Side of a small Village. Her Landlord being a Farmer, and coming to the House one Day while *Will* was there, seeing he had a good Look, and taking him for some poor Country Lad, by his Apparel, asked him if he wanted a Place : To which *Will* answering in the Affirmative, the Farmer demanded what he could do ? Whereupon, *Will* replied, " that he could keep Sheep, look after " Horses, or do any other domestic Work." Upon this, the Farmer took *Will* home with him on Trial ; and the first Employment he set him to, was to keep a large Flock of Sheep, that he had upon the Common ; for which he bargained to give him a Shilling a Week and his Board, which was very good Wages for such Work in that Part of the Country. Here we must leave *Will* in his new Occupation,

tion, and take a Step back, to see how Matters went on at Mr. *Merit's*; where the Servant had by this Time brought the Boy with *Will's* Cloaths on, and his Brother. It was with some Difficulty, that he could get the Former thither: For he understanding upon the Road, that Mr. *Merit* was a Justice of Peace, had entertained some terrible Notions, that the Servant and Brother were going to carry him before that Gentleman, in order to his being committed to Goal.

Though the Man did all that was in his Power to persuade the Lad to the contrary of his Surmises; and the Brother alledged that he could not be committed, unless somebody laid a Robbery to his Charge upon Oath; yet all this had such little Weight with *Jack*, that he would fain have escaped from them, if he could have found Means: But there not happening an Opportunity, he was obliged to go on till he came to Mr. *Merit's*; of whom *Jack's* Brother had heard such a good Character before, that he was under no such Apprehensions as the other.

On their Arrival at Mr. *Merit's*, he examined the Lad how he came by the Cloaths
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he had on; who related the whole Affair so punctual, that though Mr. *Merit* put several cross Interrogations to him, yet he could not perceive the least Contradiction in his Answers, and therefore had no Room to suspect that *Jack* told him a Lye.

However, as he was not willing to part with the Lad, till such Time as he could hear some farther Tidings of his Ward; so he thought it best to detain him by fair Means : Though perhaps some other Magistrates of more Austerity, would have made very little or no Scruple of doing it by Compulsion : Or it is very likely they would have committed him to Goal, on the Suspicion of having committed a Robbery, by *Will's* Cloaths being found upon him, as he had no Proof of obtaining honestly ; and the Exchange might, by such, have been construed to be too improbable to gain Belief. Mr. *Merit* therefore, ordered the Servant to take *Jack* and his Brother into the Kitchen, and give them some Victuals and Drink ; after which, he gave the Man a Crown for his Trouble, besides paying his Horse-hire ; and offered *Jack* a Place in his Service, which he, at his Brother's Persuasion, very
rea-

readily embraced. He then desired the Lad to pull off *Will's* Cloaths, and made him put on a Suit of his Stable-Boy's, 'till such Time as he had a more proper Garb than *Will's* provided for him. Our Reader may think, perhaps, that *Jack* was a little displeased at being stript of his Finery; but, on the contrary, the Lad was overjoyed at it. For he had led such an uneasy Life, ever since he had worn *Will's* Apparel, by his Master and Dame, and the Country Fellows jeering at his Finery; besides the Trouble he expected he had brought himself into by them; that, to say the Truth, *Jack* was more pleased at the Surrender of his Finery, than the greatest Beau could be, on the Acquisition of the most gallant Birth-Day Suit.

The Lad being thus divested of his new, and to him uneasy Habiliments; and his Brother perceiving that he was likely to be well provided for at Mr. *Merit's*, took his Leave of him and departed Home.

As Mr. *Merit* had been Abroad upon some judiciary Business for two Days past; so he had not as yet met with Leisure to hear the young Gentlewoman's Account of herself, and of the Manner how she came into

into that dismal Condition, in which his Daughter and *Amelia* had found her in the Wood. He would, indeed, have willingly attended to her Story the very next Morning; but she being very much disordered by the Fright and Fatigue, and himself obliged to set out early to meet some of his Brother Justices, he was obliged to defer it: Especially, as she sent him Word, by his Daughter, that the Villain, who had bound her, being exceedingly well mounted, she judged that he must certainly have got out of Reach by that Time. But Mr. *Merit*, having now some spare Minutes, ordered his Daughter and *Amelia* to conduct her into the Parlour to him: When being accordingly introduced by the young Ladies, he desired her to seat herself, and be pleased to acquaint him with her Circumstances; whereupon she began her Relation in the Manner, which the Reader will find in the next Chapter.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

In which Miss Watkins begins to relate her Adventures.

‘ I Do not doubt, Sir, that you have been
 ‘ as much surprized as these two Ladies
 ‘ were, at my being found in a Wood, and
 ‘ tied down to a Tree, in such a barbarous
 ‘ and inhuman Manner. But, before I
 ‘ proceed to give an Account of myself,
 ‘ I think it first behoves me in Gratitude,
 ‘ to return them my humble Thanks for
 ‘ their Charity, in releasing me from that
 ‘ miserable Condition, and their Goodness
 ‘ in conducting me hither; and then, Sir,
 ‘ to make you the same hearty Acknow-
 ‘ ledgment, for the great Care, and the
 ‘ kind and hospitable Entertainment that
 ‘ you have been so good as to bestow
 ‘ on me, since I have been in your
 ‘ House.’ “ As we have none of us done
 ‘ more than what was our Duty,” replies
 ‘ Mr. Merit, “ I beg, Madam, that you will
 ‘ be pleased to proceed without any far-
 ‘ ther Compliments.” Upon which she
 ‘ went on thus: ‘ Previous to my giving
 ‘ an Account of my coming into that
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dismal Situation in which I was found, it will be necessary, I believe, Sir, to inform you of my Birth, and some Accidents introductory to this Misfortune; and which, indeed, were the Cause of it: Not to trespass then too much on your Patience, I shall do this in as concise a Manner as is possible.

‘ My Name is *Elizabeth Watkins*. I was born at *Liverpool*, in *Lancashire*, and my Father was a wealthy Merchant of that Place: But he dying when I was young, left me under my Mother’s Care; having first bequeathed me a very handsome Fortune, which was lodged in the Hands of one of his Friends, who lived near *Prescot*, a pleasant Place at about seven or eight Miles Distance from *Liverpool*; whom he appointed Joint Executor with my Mother to his Will.’ “Pray Madam,” says Mr. *Merit* “How much might your Father leave you at the Time of his Decease?” “Five Thousand Pounds, Sir, said she, which he entrusted with this Executor of his; who being a Man supposed of a good Estate, my Father thought the Money would be safer in his Hands, than in any Merchant’s of the Place: For although he had the
‘ good

' good Fortune himself, to profit very well
 ' by Commerce; yet he was sensible that
 ' Merchandizing is very precarious. He
 ' ordered by his Will, that this Gentleman
 ' should either keep my Fortune in his
 ' own Hands, 'till I was married, allow-
 ' ing me legal Interest for the same, or else
 ' that he should put it out for me in some
 ' of the publick Funds: In either of
 ' which Cases, he was to pay my Mother
 ' for my Board and Maintenance; and I
 ' was to receive the Surplus of what arose
 ' from the Interest, when I arrived at
 ' Age.

" And how old may you be at present,
 " Madam," says Mr. *Merit*, "if I may be per-
 " mitted to ask such an unpolite Question?
 " I am now in my twentieth Year, Sir,
 " says she, and my Father has been dead
 " Ten." — " However, his Excecutor chose
 ' to keep my Fortune in his own Hands.
 ' He was a Widower, and had one Son by
 ' his first Wife, who is about four Years
 ' older than myself.

' My Father had not been dead above
 ' a Twelvemonth, before his Executor,
 ' knowing that my Mother was left in ve-
 ' ry good Circumstances, made love to

her:

her ; and to cut my Story as short as
 possible, she was weak enough to take
 him for a second Husband, though she
 dearly repented it afterwards ; as I be-
 lieve his cruel Usage to her, when he
 had thus got us both into his Hands,
 broke her Heart in less than three Years
 Time. My Father had been a very
 indulgent Husband ; and this, I imagine,
 gave her such a good Opinion of Man-
 kind, as induced her to venture too easi-
 ly upon a second. Yet, to say the Truth
 of him, my Father-in-Law behaved in
 such a handsome, and obliging Manner to
 her, in her Widowhood, and was so very
 careful of her Concerns, that I believe
 he would have deceived any Woman,
 that had even been more experienced in
 the World than my Mother was ; which
 could be but very little, as my Father
 married her from under her Mother's
 Wing, and she was but a young Woman
 when she died. But though my Father
 espoused her more for the Love of her
 Person than her Money ; yet it was quite
 the reverse with her second Husband :
 For in obtaining her, he had no other
 View but solely to enrich himself, by
 getting both our Fortunes into his
 Hands.

VOL. I.

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‘ On my Mother’s Marriage, we remo-
 ‘ ved to my Father-in-Law’s Country
 ‘ house near *Prescot*. But, poor Woman!
 ‘ she had not changed her Condition long,
 ‘ before she felt the ill Effects of her new
 ‘ Choice ; for being considerably younger
 ‘ than my Father-in-Law, he grew jealous
 ‘ of her, or rather affected to be so, for
 ‘ an Opportunity to use her ill : As I real-
 ‘ ly never knew of any Provocation, she
 ‘ ever gave him that Way. In a Word,
 ‘ he would often beat her, and lock
 ‘ her up in her Chamber for Months
 ‘ together ; especially if ever she went A-
 ‘ broad a visiting, or to take a Walk with-
 ‘ out he was with her. Nay, she durst not
 ‘ see even her own Relations without his
 ‘ Permission. And this cruel Usage up-
 ‘ on the most frivolous Pretences, at last
 ‘ put an End to her Days ; and left poor
 ‘ me (destitute of any Friend,) in his
 ‘ Clutches, to endure the most rigorous
 ‘ Torment.

“ Is this barbarous Man yet living ? ”
 says Mr. *Merit*. “ Yes, Sir,” replied Miss
Watkins, “ to my Misfortune.” “ And had
 “ he any Children by your Mother ? ” said
 Mr. *Merit*. “ One Daughter,” answered
 she, “ who is now eight Years old.” “ Par-
 “ don my interrupting you, Madam,” says

he ;

he ; "but be pleased to proceed," which she did thus :

“ Upon my Mother’s Decease, all her Fortune, which was about three Thousand Pounds, fell entirely into his Hands : And he began to project how he might manage Matters, to secure mine from going out of the Family, as he now apprehended I was growing Marriageable. To wed me himself was impossible ; being absolutely against the Laws of the Church, which would have rendered the Marriage void, and, perhaps, have punished him for the Fact : Though I verily believe, that had he lived in Times of *Popery*, he would have procured a Dispensation for it, if Money could have purchased one.

“ Madam,” replies Mr. *Merit*, “ though the Church of *Rome* is strongly taxed, and I believe not without Reason, of having, through the Influence of Money, granted many Dispensations for Marriages, that are prohibited by the Ecclesiastical Canons ; yet I have too much Charity to think so ill of them, as that they would have allowed one in such a Case as this, so directly contrary

“ and repugnant both to the Laws of
 “ God and Man.”

“ Sir,” says she, “ I submit to your better Judgment ; though I remember to
 “ have read of some similar Proceedings.”
 “ However, my Father-in-law would have
 “ struck up a Match between me and his
 “ Son, had he not above two Years before
 “ (having then no Thoughts about this
 “ Matter) betrothed him to a young Lady. And, indeed, he looked upon it as
 “ a much more advantageous Bargain, as
 “ her Fortune was nearly treble to what
 “ he knew me to have ; but, nevertheless,
 “ his Avarice would not permit him to
 “ part with mine out of the Family, if it
 “ was possible to prevent it ; and, therefore,
 “ after some Consideration, he found out
 “ a very suitable Expedient for his Purpose. He had a Kinsman who was then
 “ at Sea, being Master of a small trading
 “ Vessel ; and as he had no great Stock of
 “ his own to go on with, so my Father-in-
 “ Law thought that my Fortune would be
 “ the more serviceable to him. He be-
 “ longed to *Liverpool*, but was gone a long
 “ Voyage ; being first bound with a Cargo
 “ to the *West-Indies*, on the Disposal of
 “ which he was to sail to the *Guinea-Coast*,

‘ to purchase *Blacks* ; these he was to sell
 ‘ again at the *American* Plantations, and
 ‘ then to bring home a Cargo of Sugar
 ‘ and Tobacco.

‘ My tender Father-in-Law would tell
 ‘ me in jesting, which he was but very
 ‘ seldom in good Humour enough to do
 ‘ with me, that I should have his Kins-
 ‘ man for a Husband on his Return home ;
 ‘ but as I could conceive no very good
 ‘ Idea of a Man, that endeavoured to ac-
 ‘ quire Riches by trafficking with the hu-
 ‘ man Species as with *Horses* or *Dogs*,
 ‘ so I must confess, that I took a secret
 ‘ Dislike to him from the first mention
 ‘ of it.’

“ But pray, Madam,” says Mr. *Merit*,
 “ do you think that your Dislike was
 “ grounded on Reason ; especially, as the
 “ *Negro-Trade* may be looked upon not
 “ only as highly beneficial to the Dealers
 “ therein, but is also the very Support
 “ of the *American* Colonies : As without
 “ Negroes, they could not cultivate the
 “ Plantations there ? ”

“ Sir,” said Miss *Watkins*, “ as I am
 “ no Politician, I cannot pretend to say
 H 3 “ how

“ how far the Interest of the Nation may
 “ be concerned in such a Trade : Yet I
 “ verily believe, that it is contrary to the
 “ Laws of God, who made Man in his
 “ own Image, to rule over the rest of the
 “ Creation ; but not to be bought and sold
 “ like Beasts, for the enriching of others
 “ of the same Species. And I am cer-
 “ tain, that if the Laws of the Land had
 “ permitted it, this very Man, of whom
 “ I am speaking, would not have scrupled
 “ to have disposed of his own Father or
 “ Mother, and of all his Generation in
 “ the same Manner, if he had had but
 “ Power to do it : Nay, even although
 “ he had known they were to suffer the
 “ same Hardships and Cruelties, as I have
 “ often heard, that those poor Negroes
 “ are obliged to undergo.”

“ I am afraid, Madam,” says Mr.
Merit, “ that you judge too harshly ;
 “ at least my Charity obliges me to hope
 “ so. But pray proceed.” “ I believe you
 “ will change your Opinion, Sir,” said
 she, “ when you have heard me through-
 “ out. But to go on :”

“ That I might not disappoint my Fa-
 “ ther-in-Law in his Expectations, of mak-
 ing

ing me the Wife of his Kinsman; he not only confined me very closely within Doors, but also hired a cross old Woman to attend me as a Servant, (though really she was rather a Governess) with strict Orders never to permit me to stir out of her Sight; and these Commands she took care to obey very punctually.

I was now about sixteen Years of Age; and my intended Husband had been out upon his Voyage almost two Years, so that I had not as yet seen him. And as my Confinement, at my Father-in-Law's (whose House was at some Distance from *Prescot*, and hardly any Neighbour near us) had prevented my coming much into Men's Company, so I had not fixed my Inclinations on any one of the Sex; and, really, had little or no Thoughts about them.

My Father-in-Law had a younger Sister, that was married to a very rich Merchant at *Liverpool*; she was of a quite different Temper from her Brother, being an exceeding good-natured Woman: And having been several Times, for three or four Weeks together, with

‘ some of her Children at our House, for
 ‘ the Benefit of the Country Air; we also
 ‘ were permitted one *Christmas* to pay her
 ‘ a Visit in return, at her Town-house,
 ‘ she having often given us an Invitation
 ‘ to come and see her.

‘ I, and my young Sister, went thither
 ‘ in my Father-in-Law’s Chariot; and
 ‘ my Brother-in-Law accompanied us on
 ‘ Horseback. We set out the Day before
 ‘ *Christmas-Eve*, and had Permission to
 ‘ stay a Fortnight; as my Father-in-Law
 ‘ intended to come over thither himself,
 ‘ and spend some Part of the Holidays
 ‘ with us. Though the Weather was
 ‘ very bad at that Season, yet I think
 ‘ in the Fortnight I was there, I tasted
 ‘ more Pleasure than in all the Time be-
 ‘ fore or since, that I have lived at my
 ‘ Father-in-Law’s: For the two young
 ‘ Ladies, her Daughters, being much of
 ‘ their Mother’s Temper, were exceeding
 ‘ complaisant and obliging; and did all
 ‘ that was in their Power to divert me and
 ‘ my little Sister, during our stay at their
 ‘ House.

‘ My Aunt-in-Law’s Husband was also
 ‘ a civil, well-bred Man, and behaved
 very

‘ very politely to us : Though being engaged in great Business, and it happening at a Time when it was customary with him to balance his Years Accounts, we had very little of his Company.

‘ He kept two Clerks ; the youngest was not above fifteen, but the eldest was near twenty-one, and had not above three Months to be out of his Clerkship. He was the Son of a Lady of good Fortune at *Hull*, in this County : And as the two young Ladies and I, always passed the Evening at Cards together, Mr. *Sparks*, for that was his Name, was generally invited to make one with us.

‘ He was a handsome polite Man ; and having been employed abroad on his Master’s Business, the Knowledge of the World, that he had acquired in his Travels, rendered his Company very entertaining and agreeable. I must confess, that I, who had been so long, in a manner, immured at my Father-in-Law’s Country-house, and had never seen any Thing like it, was perfectly charmed at this young Man’s Behaviour : And the

“ two Ladies, my Cousins, soon perceived
 “ that he was more than ordinary pleased
 “ with my Company, and therefore en-
 “ deavoured to render himself the more
 “ agreeable. They would often banter me
 “ upon it; but really it was a Matter of
 “ serious Concern to Miss *Rebecca*, the el-
 “ dest, whatever Countenance she might
 “ put on. For though she was naturally
 “ very affable, and the polite Manner in
 “ which she had been brought up, ren-
 “ dered her exceeding complaisant; yet,
 “ as I have understood since, she had for
 “ some Time before settled her Affections
 “ entirely on Mr. *Sparks*, though they met
 “ with no suitable Return. For she hav-
 “ ing the Misfortune to be very much dis-
 “ figured by the Small-Pox, it made her
 “ not so agreeable in his Eyes as she de-
 “ served to have been, from her natural
 “ good Temper.”

Here Mr. *Merit* interrupted her by say-
 ing, “ that he admired her Candour and
 “ Generosity in speaking so handsomely of
 “ her Rival; as it was a Thing very un-
 “ common with her Sex, whom he had
 “ generally observed to be full of Calumny
 “ and Invectives, against such Persons,
 “ however deserving, on the like Occa-
 “ sion.”

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" sion." He then desired her to take some small Respite in her Narration, that she might better recollect the Circumstances; which Injunction she obeyed, and then proceeded in her Story, as the Reader will find in the next Chapter.

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C H A P. IX.

The Continuation of Miss Watkins's Adventures.

‘ **N**OTWITHSTANDING the
 ‘ Opinions of my two Cousins, yet
 ‘ I could not discern any Thing in Mr.
 ‘ *Sparks*, wherewith to flatter myself, that
 ‘ he was enamoured with me: Though
 ‘ to confess the Truth, I had entertained
 ‘ a very strong Affection for him. But
 ‘ the Ladies being invited one Night to
 ‘ a Ball, that was given by some Officers,
 ‘ and other Gentlemen in the Town, they
 ‘ took me thither with them; and Mr.
 ‘ *Sparks*, and my Brother-in-Law, accom-
 ‘ panied us.

‘ We were entertained there very hand-
 ‘ somely: And as it was no great Distance
 ‘ from our House, and a fine Moon-light
 ‘ Night, we chose to walk it Home; my
 ‘ Brother-in-Law conducting my two Cou-
 ‘ sins, and I was guarded by Mr. *Sparks*.
 ‘ He suffered them to get at such a
 ‘ Distance before us, as to prevent their
 ‘ over-hearing our Discourse; and it was
 ‘ then,

' then, that he took the Opportunity of
 ' declaring his Passion to me, in such ten-
 ' der and elegant Terms, as I must own
 ' made me at a Loss how to answer him.
 ' What I said in Reply I cannot well re-
 ' collect; for though I kept myself within
 ' Bounds of the greatest Decorum, to
 ' which Modesty obliges our Sex, yet such
 ' was my Confusion, that I am certain my
 ' Answer must have been very absurd.
 ' However, he seemed no Ways discour-
 ' aged, and as this happened at the lat-
 ' ter End of the first Week of my being
 ' at my Aunt's, he took so many Oppor-
 ' tunities of conversing with me during
 ' the second Week of my Stay there, that
 ' I could no longer deny that his Passion
 ' was no Ways disagreeable to my Incl-
 ' nations. In a Word, I confessed my-
 ' self very well pleased with his Addres-
 ' ses, and promised that I would give
 ' him my Hand, whenever he could ob-
 ' tain my Father-in-Law's Consent, which
 ' he assured me he would try all Means
 ' to gain.'

' The Fortnight of our Stay there being
 ' expired, we took our Leaves, and return-
 ' ed Home again to *Prescot*. Not long
 ' after, Mr. *Sparks* waited on my Father-
 ' in-Law

in-Law, to request me in Marriage,
 upon his being out of his Clerkship,
 in which he had a very small Time to
 continue; but he met with such an abrupt
 Reception, as put him out of all Hopes
 of ever gaining my Father-in-Law's
 Consent: And, indeed, his Solicitation
 proved rather a great Hindrance than an
 Advantage to him; for it occasioned
 my being confined more closely than
 before. However, he found Means to
 write to me, by a Countryman that
 worked in my Father-in-Law's Grounds
 at *Prescot*, that used frequently to go
 to *Warrington*, to see a Sister of his
 that was there in Service, and who hap-
 pened, at that Time, to live at Mr.
Sparks's Master's.

By the Correspondence we thus held
 together, I took the Opportunity to let
 him know the true Reason of my Fa-
 ther-in-Law's refusing to let him have
 me; acquainting him that he designed
 me for a Kinsman of his own, who was
 now at Sea, but was daily expected
 Home.

As it happened, Mr. *Sparks* knew the
 very Man; and wrote me such a Cha-

racter

character of him, that had I been so much inclined to the Match, yet the Description of such a Brute, as I was to expect by this Letter, would certainly have gone a great Way towards breaking it off.

“ But pray, Madam,” says Mr. *Merit*, “ do not you think that Mr. *Sparks*, your Favourite, might have exaggerated a little too much, in the Character that he sent you of his Rival, in order to prejudice you the more against him?”

“ No, Sir,” replied Miss *Watkins*, “ I assure you, upon my Word, that he was very impartial in his Description, and did him no more than Justice: For I believe there are not three Persons, amongst all that knew him at *Liverpool*, but would have given him a much worse Character, than what Mr. *Sparks* wrote me of him.”

‘ However, it was not long before this fine Lover of mine, that was to be, arrived from his Voyage; and having settled his Affairs a little at *Liverpool*, he came, on my Father-in-Law’s Invitation, to spend some Time at our House.’

It

" It was here that I had the Unhappi-
 " nefs of first seeing him; but I really want
 " Words to give you an Idea of his Per-
 " son, which altogether made a more Gro-
 " tesque Figure, than is possible for any
 " Dutch Painter to design, much more
 " for me to describe. But, if I was to
 " attempt it, I should tell you, that he
 " was of small Stature, and very thick and
 " clumsily built for his Size: He had a
 " large Head, low Forehead, little dimu-
 " nitive bloated Cheeks, and a very short
 " Neck; and his Legs, which was the most
 " proportionate Part about him, were
 " much of a Thickness from Top to Bot-
 " tom, but very short withal: However,
 " they seemed of sufficient Strength to sup-
 " port his short, squat Body. Then as
 " for his Complexion, it seemed naturally
 " to have been of a yellow Hue; but
 " was now so Sun-burnt, that it was
 " hard to say whether it was black or
 " tawney."

" The Features and Complexion of a
 " Man, Madam," says Mr. *Merit*, " seem
 " to be of very little Import, however
 " they may appear to your Sex; as we
 " neither frame them, nor can alter them

" our-

“ ourselves: But pray of what Sort of a
 “ Disposition was he?”

“ I’ll tell you, Sir,” replied Miss *Wat-*
kins, “ his Mind was rather more de-
 “ formed than his Person; and his Heart,
 “ if possible, blacker than his Counte-
 “ nance.” “ You surprise me,” says Mr.
Merit! “ Can there such a Creature exist
 “ upon Earth, as you have described!”
 “ Whether he is existing now I cannot
 “ justly say, Sir,” replied she; “ but
 “ such as I tell you he was not long ago;
 “ and, I believe, when you have heard
 “ me further, you will allow, that I have
 “ not painted the Devil blacker than he
 “ really is.”

“ That he was fierce, brutal, and cruel,
 “ is well known to all those unhappy
 “ Wretches, the Seamen, that ever had
 “ the Misfortune to go a Voyage with
 “ him, since he was Master of a Ship: That
 “ he is proud and covetous, is universally
 “ acknowledged, by all who have had any
 “ Dealings with him; and that he was
 “ lustful and villainous, I myself have ex-
 “ perienced.

He

' He had not been at our House above
 ' a Day or two, before he made his Ad-
 ' dresses to me by my Father-in-Law's
 ' Direction ; but in such a Manner, that
 ' they bore more the Air of Commands,
 ' than of Intreaties. I returned them in
 ' as civil a Way as I could, by telling
 ' him I was not disposed to marry at pre-
 ' sent ; but when I did, I would not have
 ' a Sea-faring Man for a Husband. Upon
 ' this flat Denial, he began to be very
 ' uppish at me, and pert upon the fair-
 ' weathered Land-Sparks, as he called
 ' them, whom he supposed I had taken
 ' a Fancy to. I endured it all with a great
 ' deal of Patience ; and finding that he
 ' could not bring me into any Inclination
 ' for him, by his foul Speeches, he withdrew
 ' himself, at last, to my great Comfort, at
 ' that Time. He took every Opportunity
 ' afterwards of worrying me so much
 ' with his rough Courtship, that I was ob-
 ' liged to give him a flat and positive
 ' Denial ; which put him into such a Rage,
 ' that I verily thought he would have
 ' beaten me. I also told my Father-in-
 ' Law, in as plain a Manner as I durst
 ' that if he could pick no better Husband
 ' for me than his Kinsman, I would never

consent to marry. Upon which he swore a great Oath, that if I would not have him, I should wed no other; and directly ordered the old Woman, whom he had placed about me, to lock me in a Chamber, the Windows whereof were nailed up, that I might have no Light: Neither was I permitted any other Food but Bread and Water; for he swore bitterly, that low Diet should humble my high Spirit.

‘ I was kept in this Manner during a Fortnight; and he would have continued me so longer, had he not been apprehensive that it would have impaired my Health too much, for him to execute his Designs. At the Fortnight’s End, I was releas’d from my Confinement: For it seems that he and my intended Husband had altered the Plan of their Operations; and finding they could get no good of me by foul Means, had resolved to try what they could do by fair ones, or, at least, by such as appeared so; for they had concerted another Project, of which I had not the least Apprehension.

On,

' On my Releasement, my Father-in-
 ' Law, and his Kinsman, behaved to me
 ' with extraordinary Complaisance, and I
 ' was constantly permitted to sit at Table
 ' with them. Nay, my Lover declined ma-
 ' king any more Proffers of his Person, as
 ' which I was greatly pleased; as it must be
 ' certain I could not help abhorring a Man,
 ' on whose Account I had received such cruel
 ' Treatment. Matters went on thus very
 ' well to my liking for about three Weeks:
 ' When one Day, it being that of my Fa-
 ' ther-in-Law's Wedding with my Mother,
 ' he declared that he would celebrate it
 ' which I the more wondered at, as I had
 ' never known him, excepting once in her
 ' Life-time, to have taken any such No-
 ' tice of it before.

' Accordingly, he ordered a very sumptu-
 ' ous Dinner to be provided, to which
 ' Companion of his Kinsman's was invited
 ' who was almost such another Brute as
 ' himself; but rather the politest, and
 ' most likely of the two.

' My Father-in-Law, his Son, and
 ' Kinsman, together with his Companion
 ' myself, and my little Sister, all sat down

to this Entertainment together. The Wine went about pretty freely at Dinner, and they obliged me, though in a complaisant Way, to take a Glas or two more than I usually did. I would have retired when Dinner was over, but was not permitted ; for they talked of playing at Cards, and my Father-in-Law said I should make one with them. However, before the Cards were called for, they determined to have a Bowl of Punch, which they said would be soon finished, and then to set to play.

‘ When the Punch came in, they began to drink Healths to the Memory of the Day, and of my deceased Mother ; with several others, that they obliged me to pledge. In a Word, they forced me to drink five or six Glasses ; and as they had purposely ordered the Liquor to be made very strong, so I soon found myself begin to grow intoxicated ; and I really believe that three Glasses more would have made me quite fuddled.

‘ But what they designed for my Bane, proved my Preservation. For the Punch had such an Effect, that instead of making me stupid, and foolish, as it does
‘ some

' Some People, it rather filled me with more
 ' Life and Spirit, only causing me to faul-
 ' ter a little now and then in my Speech;
 ' which I found they took Notice of, by
 ' their turning their Heads and smiling,
 ' whereupon I absolutely refused pledging
 ' any more Healths. Upon this, my Father-
 ' in-Law said, that I should sing a Song to
 ' divert the Company : Which I chose to
 ' comply with, rather than the other al-
 ' ternative that was proposed to me of
 ' drinking more Punch. I had finish-
 ' ed two Songs, and was just beginning
 ' another, when a Servant entered the
 ' Room ; and whispering somewhat in my
 ' Father-in-Law's Ear, they withdrew
 ' together.

' My Father-in-Law staid out of the
 ' Room about seven Minutes, when he re-
 ' turned with a Gentleman in a black
 ' Coat, with Boots on, to whom he filled
 ' a Glass of the Liquor that was upon the
 ' Table : Then, instantly taking me by
 ' the Hand, he led me from my Chair to
 ' his Kinsman, who was standing ; and
 ' joining our Hands together in his own,
 ' presented us to the New-comer, saying
 ' withal, that this was the Couple on
 ' whom he was to perform his Office. I
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presently snatched back my Hand, and giving a loud Shriek, cried out, Oh, Papa! (for so I was always obliged to call him) what are you at! for I immediately apprehended that the Gentleman whom he had brought in, was a *Parson*, and that they were about to marry me by Force; and so it really was. The Clergyman pulling a Book out of his Pocket, was going to proceed, when I declared aloud that I would not be married. But my Father-in-Law, his Kinsman, and my Brother-in-Law, called out to him to read the Ceremony; upon which I flew into a violent Rage, and made such a Noise, by my Shrieks and Outcries, that it was almost impossible for him to perform it. And, indeed, I believe, if he had not had his Cue given him before, he would not have attempted to have gone on so far as he did, on the Noise and Clamour that I made. However, he proceeded as well as he could to read the Ceremony, till he came to the joining of Hands; when though my Father-in-Law attempted it, and my Brother-in-Law to assist him in giving my Hand to his Kinsman, yet the Liquor inspired me with Courage and Strength enough to resist them; and

‘ on

' on getting my Hand free from theirs, I
 ' dealt my Brother-in-Law such a Blow,
 ' with a Chair that I caught up, as felled
 ' him to the Ground. He rose, and very
 ' manfully struck me again, giving me
 ' such a Blow with his Double-fist, as sent
 ' me against his Kinsman's Companion;
 ' who going to save me from falling on the
 ' Ground, received also a Blow from my
 ' Brother-in-Law, that was intended for
 ' me, and which made his Nose spin out
 ' with Blood. On meeting with this Sa-
 ' lute, he instantly flew at my Brother-in-
 ' Law; and while they two were at Fifty-
 ' cuffs, and my Father and his Kinsman
 ' endeavouring to part them, I ran out of
 ' the Room; when getting into my own
 ' Chamber, I locked and barred myself up
 ' so closely, as it was almost impossible for
 ' them to come at me: Nay, had they
 ' proceeded to have broke in upon me, I
 ' had determined to leap out of the Win-
 ' dow; and, should certainly have done it.

' However they made no such Attempt;
 ' for as I understood since, by one of the
 ' Servants, they had much ado to recon-
 ' cile my Brother-in-Law and the rough-
 ' hewn young Fellow my intended Spouse's
 ' Companion; and it was some Time be-
 fore

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' fore they could bring it about. As for
 ' the Parson, Fighting was not the Busi-
 ' ness that he came about, so he did not in-
 ' terfere with them; but when the Comba-
 ' tants were parted, and he had received
 ' his Fee from my Father-in-Law, he
 ' took his Leave, after drinking a Glass to
 ' the Cessation of all Animosity among the
 ' Company.

' My Father-in-Law was horribly vex-
 ' ed, at finding the Scheme he had laid
 ' prove abortive; and that what was de-
 ' signed for my Destruction had turned to
 ' their own Confusion: For this Fray was
 ' very much owing to the Liquor they had
 ' drank, the Glass, as I observed before,
 ' going about very freely at Dinner-Time.
 ' And as my Brother-in-Law naturally
 ' loved Tipling, I do imagine that he had
 ' taken a pretty good Whet before Dinner;
 ' for I thought that he seemed rather For-
 ' warder than the rest of the Company,
 ' before the Fray began; and indeed, I
 ' believe he was then nearly drunk.

' I durst not come near my Father-in-
 ' Law for some Days afterwards; but kept
 ' close to my own Room, when an Acci-
 ' dent happened that freed me from my
 VOL. I. I ' Lover's

‘ Lover’s Company : Which was his be-
 ‘ ing obliged to go to *London*, to dispose of
 ‘ some Part of the Cargo, that he had
 ‘ brought Home from the *West-Indies*.

‘ He staid at *London* about three Months,
 ‘ during which Time I received several
 ‘ Letters from Mr. *Sparks* ; in one of
 ‘ which he acquainted me, that being now
 ‘ out of his Clerkship, he intended in a few
 ‘ Days to come and see me. I also, in
 ‘ Return, wrote him Word of the Usage
 ‘ I had received from my Father-in-Law,
 ‘ and his Kinsman ; and the continual
 ‘ Dread and Apprehensions that I lived
 ‘ under of meeting with worse, and of
 ‘ being obliged to give my Hand to the
 ‘ Man that I abhorred.

‘ These Remonstrances quickened his
 ‘ Dispatch, and he came in a few Days af-
 ‘ terwards to visit me : But my Father-in-
 ‘ Law being at Home, he could gain no
 ‘ Admittance to me ; and was treated by
 ‘ him with very foul Language, for having
 ‘ the Assurance, as he termed it, to court
 ‘ me, after he had forbidden him.

‘ This

‘ This put Mr. *Sparks* upon seeking for some Expedient to get me out of my Thralldom. Accordingly I received a Letter from him by the same Hands as conveyed his former, which was by the Man whom I have mentioned before ; letting me know that between Twelve and One the next Night, he would be at my Chamber-Window with a Rope Ladder, if I had Courage enough to venture down one, and make my Escape with him.’—Here a Servant entering the Room, to deliver a Message to Mr. *Merit*, interrupted Miss *Watkins* for some small Time; but upon his retiring, she proceeded on her Story, as in the following Chapter.

I 2

CHAP.

‘ This

C H A P. X.

*The Conclusion of Miss Watkins's Narrative
of her Adventures.*

‘ I Was highly overjoyed at receiving
 ‘ this Notice from Mr. *Sparks*; and
 ‘ having packed up a few Things in a
 ‘ small Bundle, I put it under my Bed for
 ‘ fear my *Duenna* should discover it. The
 ‘ Family all went to rest at their usual
 ‘ Hour, which was Ten o’Clock; when I
 ‘ flung open my Window and waited with
 ‘ Impatience for the Time of my Release-
 ‘ ment.

‘ The Hour at Length arrived, and I
 ‘ heard Mr. *Sparks* fix the Ladder against
 ‘ my Window. As he had two Garden
 ‘ Walls to climb over, and the outer one
 ‘ was very high, he had brought the
 ‘ Man that worked at our House along
 ‘ with him, to assist him in my Escape.
 ‘ But how deceitful is the World! —
 ‘ Treachery abounds every where! — This
 ‘ very Man, whom Mr. *Sparks* had often
 ‘ handsomely rewarded for conveying our
 ‘ Letters, betrayed our Affignation to my
 ‘ Father-

Father-in-Law, a few Hours before it was to have been put in Execution. For though he found his Interest in conveying the Letters between us ; yet as he knew that would be at an End by our coming together, he thought to avail himself more by the Discovery of the Affair to my Father-in-Law, than by what Mr. *Sparks* was to give him for his Assistance, which was three Guineas : And he really expected to get double that Sum of my Father-in-Law, besides being continued in his Work about the House, which he was sure of losing, if, at any Time, it should be discovered that he had been concerned in the Correspondence that was carried on between Mr. *Sparks* and me.—

“ But pray, Madam,” says *Louisa*, “ where was the old Woman all this while, to whose Charge you had been entrusted.”

“ Indeed,” replied she, “ we were to run a great Hazard of her detecting us ; for she lay only in a large Closet in my Chamber. But, as she loved a Cup of Ale, and generally slept very sound afterwards, I had taken Care to ply her with a whole Quart that Night before she went to Bed, which I had ordered

“ to be brought up at Supper Time ; and
 “ she was snoring very heartily when Mr.
 “ *Sparks* entered my Chamber.”

‘ My Father-in-Law took not the least
 ‘ Notice of his knowing any Thing of my
 ‘ intended Escape to any Person, except
 ‘ to his Son ; and indeed, they did not go
 ‘ to Bed, but lay down in their Cloaths till
 ‘ the Hour appointed : When getting up
 ‘ they raised one of the Servants, and
 ‘ all three waited in the Room that was
 ‘ beneath mine, in order to detect my
 ‘ Lover on his Arrival.—Here, it being
 ‘ Moon-Light, they saw him and the Man
 ‘ affix the Ladder, and suffered him to
 ‘ get up into my Chamber ; when rushing
 ‘ out, they instantly cut down the Ladder,
 ‘ and placing the Servant as a Centinel
 ‘ below to prevent Mr. *Sparks* making his
 ‘ Escape that Way, the other two ran
 ‘ up Stairs and broke directly into my
 ‘ Chamber.

‘ The Noise they made awakened the
 ‘ old Woman, who roared out Thieves !
 ‘ very loudly : And as they brought up
 ‘ Candles with them, I could see that each
 ‘ had a Pistol ready cock’d in his Hand.
 ‘ My Brother-in-Law directly levelled his

' at Mr. *Sparks*, when happily the Flint
 ' missed Fire ; and Mr. *Sparks* drawing a
 ' Hanger, that he wore, gave him a Cut a-
 ' cross the Arm that instantly disabled him,
 ' and forced him to let his Pistol drop.
 ' My Father-in-Law fired his ; but elevat-
 ' ing it too much, the Ball flew over my
 ' Head, and made its Way through the
 ' Window into the Garden.

' The firing of this Pistol filled the
 ' the Room so full of Smoke, that we
 ' could not well have seen one another
 ' if there had been any Light ; but the
 ' Explosion put out both their Candles.
 ' Upon which, my Father-in-Law called
 ' out loudly for the Servant, that was post-
 ' ed below Stairs, to bring up a Light,
 ' and kept storming and raving at Mr.
 ' *Sparks*, threatning what he would do to
 ' him when the Light came. But as it was
 ' some Time first, and Mr. *Sparks* had
 ' beforehand provided himself with a Pair
 ' of Pocket Pistols, which he had not had
 ' Time to draw, he directly pulled one
 ' out ; and hearing the Servant coming up
 ' Stairs, and perceiving the Chamber-Door,
 ' by the Light which he was bringing,
 ' glancing into it, he directly made his
 ' Way

‘ Way down Stairs, with his Hanger in
 ‘ one Hand and a Pistol in the other.

‘ The Servant that was ascending the
 ‘ the Stairs, on meeting him thus well
 ‘ armed, turned about and fled down much
 ‘ faster than he came up: Neither would
 ‘ my Father-in-Law’s Courage permit him
 ‘ to follow Mr. *Sparks* too close; so that
 ‘ he found Means of getting into the Gar-
 ‘ den by the Door that they had left open.

‘ Here he found the Man whom he
 ‘ had employed as his Assistant, and who
 ‘ in the Interim of his entering my Cham-
 ‘ ber, had been provided with a long Pole
 ‘ by the Servant, with which he struck at
 ‘ Mr. *Sparks*; who, not expecting such a
 ‘ Salutation from him, was very near being
 ‘ felled to the Ground by it. But reco-
 ‘ vering himself and discharging his Pistol
 ‘ at the Fellow, he saw him drop; and
 ‘ leaving him Roaring very loudly on the
 ‘ Ground, he hastened away to make his
 ‘ Escape out of the Garden. The Wall
 ‘ of that which he was now in, being but
 ‘ low, he very easily got over it into the
 ‘ outer Garden; but there the Wall was
 ‘ so high that it would have been impossi-
 ‘ ble for him to have climb’d it, had he
 ‘ not

not luckily perceived a Ladder standing against a Tree, that the Gardener had been clipping the Day before. By the Help of this he mounted on the Top of the Wall, when pulling the Ladder over, he got down on the other Side, and made the best of his Way over the Fields.

‘ The firing of these two Pistols alarmed all the House, but as both my Brother-in-Law and the Man that was to assist Mr. *Sparks* were wounded, it prevented my Father-in-Law’s Pursuit any further than searching the Gardens after him ; and it was not till the next Morning that they found which Way he had made his Escape out of them.

‘ After this Attempt to get my Liberty, I was confined more closely than before; and my *Duenna* was ordered to lie with me, to prevent any such Undertaking for the future. Nothing, surely, could be more miserable than I was in my present Condition; and the not hearing from Mr. *Sparks*, who could find no Conveyance to send me any Letters by, for some Time, gave me exceeding great Uneasiness, as I was afraid that he might have received some Hurt in

‘ the Encounter. However, I was not
 ‘ sorry to hear that the Man who had be-
 ‘ trayed us was wounded; and was well
 ‘ pleased on finding that my Father-in-
 ‘ Law did not answer his Expectations, in
 ‘ gratifying him. For though at first he
 ‘ promised to reward him handsomely,
 ‘ yet he gave him only a Guinea; whereas
 ‘ Mr. *Sparks* had promised him three, as
 ‘ I said before, for his Assistance. He
 ‘ was soon cured of his Wound, for the
 ‘ Pistol Ball had passed through his Arm,
 ‘ without touching the Bone; and though
 ‘ my Father-in-Law paid for the Cure,
 ‘ yet it was a Loss to the Man, as he could
 ‘ do no Work till he was well: And he
 ‘ having very imprudently discovered that
 ‘ he had conveyed our Letters from one to
 ‘ the other, my Father-in-Law thought
 ‘ proper, upon the Curing of his Wound,
 ‘ to discard him from working, either a-
 ‘ bout the House or in his Grounds.—
 ‘ Such was the Reward his Treachery
 ‘ met with: I own, it gave me great Sa-
 ‘ tisfaction; and I heartily wish that all
 ‘ Perfidy may meet with the like.

‘ As my Father-in-Law was of too
 ‘ cross and severe a Temper to be well-
 ‘ beloved by his Servants, so Mr. *Sparks*
 ‘ found

found Means to bribe over one of his Footmen to his Interest; and it was by this Means that I at last received a Letter from him: Wherein he informed me, of his Escape with little or no Hurt, which set my Heart very much at Ease, to what it had been before. He also let me know, that he intended soon, if he could possibly find any Means for my Deliverance, to take me with him, and to go and settle at *Hull*, near his Mother's, there to carry on the Business of a Merchant, which he had been bred to.

' In Return to this, I took an Opportunity of sending a Letter by the same Person; wherein I desired him to forbear undertaking any more such hazardous Attempts for my Deliverance, by which he must endanger his Life; but rather to wait with Patience, till Fortune should point out some Way for our coming together, without running such a Venture.

' By this Time my Father-in-Law's Kinsman having finished his Business at *London*, was returned to our House; and I was again tormented on all Sides, with Sollicitations to marry him.—But I re-

I 6

' mained

' mained as obdurate to all their Entreaties
 ' as I had been before : For Mr. *Sparks*
 ' having so gallantly ventured his Life for
 ' my Sake, it enhanced his Love to me so
 ' much, that I was fully determined never
 ' to marry any other Man.

' Though I was now very much upon
 ' my Guard against any new Enterprizes
 ' they might undertake, to force me to
 ' have the Man I detested ; yet they found
 ' Means to make another Attempt upon
 ' me.

' The old Woman who attended me,
 ' said one Night, that she was very ill and
 ' would go to Bed before me, I was to sup
 ' that Evening, with my Father-in-Law
 ' and his Son ; after which, I took my
 ' Candle and went up Stairs. I sat down
 ' to Reading some Time, and then I un-
 ' dressed myself and went to Bed : Where
 ' my Bedfellow, as I thought, lay with her
 ' Back towards me, and her Face next to
 ' the Wainscot. Just as I was going to
 ' sleep, I felt an Arm stretching over me ;
 ' which I thinking very unusual, was going
 ' to lay it aside, when I found the Person
 ' to whom it belonged, striving to get in-
 ' to an odd Posture : This put me into

‘ a terrible Fright ; and I thought the
 ‘ Hand that I was removing from me, felt
 ‘ somewhat harder than what Mrs. Ford’s
 ‘ (my *Duenna*) used to do ; and was soon
 ‘ convinced of the Sex of my Bed-fellow
 ‘ by the bristly Beard which I found rubbing
 ‘ against my Face, on his attempting to
 ‘ kiss me.

‘ I instantly set up a loud Squall, as I
 ‘ apprehended who it was : but Nobody
 ‘ coming to my Assistance, I endeavoured
 ‘ to extricate myself from his Embraces ;
 ‘ which at last I did, at the Expence only
 ‘ of a torn Shift. I fled out of the Room,
 ‘ but hardly knew whether I went till I
 ‘ found myself in the Garret, where the
 ‘ Maids lay. My coming awakened them ;
 ‘ and one of them striking a Light, I
 ‘ went to Bed to her, and lay there all
 ‘ Night.

‘ I was very careful ever after, of dis-
 ‘ tinguishing who lay with me, before I
 ‘ went to Bed to them. Nay, I would not
 ‘ suffer the old Woman to come to Bed,
 ‘ till she had locked the Door, and given
 ‘ me the Key to put under my Pillow.
 ‘ My intended Spouse, not long after was
 ‘ obliged to take a Trip to *Lisbon*, so that
 ‘ I

• I was once again set free from any Apprehensions of him.

• I took an Opportunity to communicate the whole Affair to Mr. *Sparks*, who sent me a very kind Letter in Return; and informed me, that he had engaged my Father-in-Law's Footman to facilitate my Escape, which was to be put in Execution the next Night; when he was to conduct me to Mr. *Sparks*, who was to wait for us with Horses at a little Publick House, adjoining to *Prescot*. The Man kept the Keys of his Master's Cellars, and he invited Mrs. *Ford* the old Woman, to drink a Glass of Wine; into which he conveyed some Laudanum, that Mr. *Sparks* had purposely given him, and it took Effect soon after. On her coming up Stairs, I had a Book in my Hand and pretended to be reading; but really my Thoughts were too much engaged on my Flight, to partake of that Amusement; and the old Woman sitting down in the Chair, presently fell fast asleep. About Twelve o'Clock *Robert* the Footman, came softly up Stairs, and informed me, in a Whisper, that all was safe, if I was ready. We left the old Woman

Woman to finish her Nap in the Chair;
 with the Candle burning by her; and
 stealing down Stairs, went out at the
 Garden Door, and hasted away to the
 Place appointed.

‘ We found Mr. *Sparks* ready on the Spot;
 which was almost a Mile off from my Fa-
 ther-in-Law’s, with a Horse for me and
 another for the Footman, who had deter-
 mined to take his Flight with us: And,
 indeed, besides the Reward he was to have
 for conducting me thither, Mr. *Sparks*
 had promised to take him into his Service.
 We all three rode away as fast as the
 Horses could gallop, not stopping till we
 came to *Leigh*, a Town about twelve Miles
 distant from the Place whence he set out,
 which Road we chose rather than to go
 through *Warrington*, the better to deceive
 our Pursuers. Here we got a little mul-
 led Wine and a Toast, by Way of Re-
 freshment for Breakfast, while our Horses
 took a Feed of Corn; and then we set
 out again, as hard as our Nags could go,
 towards that steep Ridge of Hills, or
 rather Mountains, called *Blackstone-Edge*,
 intending to cut across the Country to
Kingston upon Hull, where Mr. *Sparks*’s
 Mother lived. This being a wild Part
 of

‘ of the Country, and the Cross Roads very
 ‘ bad, we could not always keep upon the
 ‘ Gallop; but generally made our Way good,
 ‘ where we found the Road any Thing toler-
 ‘ able. We had rode about twenty Miles
 ‘ from *Leigh*, when being upon a rocky Piece
 ‘ of Ground, Mr. *Sparks*’s Horse stumbled
 ‘ and fell with him. Though he happily
 ‘ received no Damage himself, yet the
 ‘ Horse was lamed by the Fall, and we had
 ‘ now above six Miles to go to the next
 ‘ Town, before we could get another.

‘ I would fain have persuaded him to
 ‘ have taken the Footman’s, and let him
 ‘ ride the lame Horse, but he would
 ‘ not consent to it: urging, that in Case
 ‘ we were pursued, he would divert those
 ‘ that followed us, that we might have
 ‘ Time to get away from them. He,
 ‘ therefore, took a small Cloak-Bag, which
 ‘ he had with him, and put it behind the
 ‘ Footman; and also delivered to me a
 ‘ Purse, wherein there was about fifty Gui-
 ‘ neas; bidding us, if any Thing happen-
 ‘ ed, not to mind him, but to make the
 ‘ best of our Way across the Country to
 ‘ his Mother’s, telling us that we might
 ‘ procure a Guide at *Hallifax*: For we
 ‘ intended to avoid as much as possible the
 ‘ many

main Roads, and rather go some Miles about, than lie in the Way of those we expected would pursue us. The Precautions that he thus took for our Safety, proved no more than necessary. We were upon a Stony Heath at the Bottom of *Blackstone-Edge*, when Mr. *Sparks's* Horse stumbled; and we could not go very fast now he was lame. However, as we had made such Haste hitherto, and were got above thirty Miles from my Father-in-Law's, we were under very little Apprehensions. But we had scarcely entered a Lane on the other Side of the Heath, before we heard the Noise of Horses coming after us full Gallop; and I just turned my Head to see who followed us, when I perceived my Brother-in-Law and his Servant in full Pursuit. Mr. *Sparks* called out to me and the Footman, to ride on as fast as we could; but the Lane being very strait though we fled apace, yet on looking back we could see what passed.

My Brother-in-Law, on his coming up to Mr. *Sparks*, drew one of his Pistols and fired at him. The Report of this Pistol made us stop a little to see how Matters went on; and I ordered the Man that

was

' was with me, to ride up to them and
 ' assist Mr. *Sparks*. The Ball of my Bro-
 ' ther-in-Law's Pistol wounded Mr. *Sparks*
 ' in the left Arm: But, however, he in-
 ' stantly returned his Fire, and I saw both
 ' Man and Horse fall to the Ground, the
 ' latter being killed upon the Spot.

' By this Fall, and the Horse rolling
 ' over him, my Brother-in-Law was so
 ' much bruised, that I perceived he could
 ' not get up without the Assistance of his
 ' Servant; who instantly alighted from his
 ' Horse to help his Master. In the mean
 ' while Mr. *Sparks* took up my Brother-
 ' in-Law's Pistol, which (upon the Horse's
 ' dropping) had fallen out of the Holster,
 ' and fired it off in the Air. Then mount-
 ' ing his lame Horse he rode up to us as
 ' well as he could, having his own Pistol
 ' which he had not discharged, ready
 ' cock'd in his Hand; swearing that he
 ' would shoot either of them if they offered
 ' to follow him. My Brother-in-Law be-
 ' ing a heavy Man, was too much bruised
 ' by his Fall to attempt it: For he could
 ' hardly mount the Servant's Horse to ride
 ' Home again; and his Man had got no
 ' Fire Arms wherewith to attack us, or
 ' defend himself.

' Mr.

‘ Mr. *Sparks*’s Wound bled so fast, that we knew not what to do with it; but riding on to the End of the Lane, which put us out of the Sight of our Pursuers, we discovered a little Cottage at a small Distance; and he being by this Time very faint, with the Loss of Blood, we both persuaded him to ride thither, in Hopes of meeting with some Relief.

‘ On our coming up to this House, which belonged to a labouring Man, we were met at the Door by a good motherly Sort of a Woman; who on being informed that Mr. *Sparks* had been wounded by some Rogues in the Lane, that had attempted to rob us, and seeing us make a good Appearance, very readily invited us to enter her Habitation, such as it was; and said, that she would make a Bed for the wounded Gentleman, and send her Son with our Man, to shew him the Way to fetch a Surgeon.

‘ After having helped Mr. *Sparks* off his Horse, and seated him in an old-armed Chair, the Footman and the Boy set out instantly on Horseback to *Hallifax* to fetch the Surgeon: The Boy taking
‘ an

‘ Mr.

‘ an old Horse of his Father’s that was
 ‘ grazing on the Common, and the Man
 ‘ riding his own.

‘ Mr. *Sparks* continued still bleeding,
 ‘ but happily the good Woman of the
 ‘ House having some Skill in Surgery,
 ‘ found Means to stop the Blood : And
 ‘ applying an innocent Salve of her own,
 ‘ she bound up the Wound till the Sur-
 ‘ geon’s Arrival, who came in about three
 ‘ Hours after. On examining the Wound
 ‘ he presently told us that the Ball was
 ‘ lodged in his Arm, but had not broke
 ‘ the Bone ; and applying some Salve to
 ‘ the Wound for the present, said, that he
 ‘ would come again the next Day and ex-
 ‘ tract the Ball.

‘ Mr. *Sparks* was afterwards put to Bed;
 ‘ and the Woman made him a Diet Drink
 ‘ of some Herbs, that the Surgeon had
 ‘ directed her to get, to keep the Fever
 ‘ from him. He called me by myself to
 ‘ his Bed-Side, and blamed me very much
 ‘ for not making the best of my Way with
 ‘ the Man, according to his former Di-
 ‘ rections, when I found we were pursued ;
 ‘ as, that if any more fatal Accident had
 ‘ happened to him in the Encounter, I
 ‘ must

must certainly have been obliged to have gone back with them. However, he desired me to set out with the Servant early the next Morning for his Mother's, as he could not think me at present in a Place of any Safety; and said, that he would follow us as soon as his Wound would permit him. But, notwithstanding all his Entreaties, I declared that I would not stir from him till the Surgeon had extracted the Ball from his Arm, and that I had heard his Opinion whether he was in any Danger.

‘ Early the next Morning the Surgeon came, and after taking out the Ball and dressing the Wound, he informed us that he was in no Apprehensions of Mr. *Sparks's* being in any Danger: For nothing could now hurt him but a Fever, of which at present he did seem to have any Symptons. Upon this, when the Surgeon was gone, Mr. *Sparks* pressed me very much to take his Advice, and set out for his Mother's; and this he insisted upon so strongly that I was obliged to comply, though I did it with great Reluctance, and have heartily repented of it since.

‘ After

' After our taking a tender Farewell, I
 ' and the Footman set out together. Mr.
 ' *Sparks* took ten Guineas for himself, out
 ' of the Purse that he had before commit-
 ' ted to my Care, and telling me, that
 ' would be sufficient for his Use, con-
 ' strained me to take the rest for fear of any
 ' Accident. We struck cross the Country
 ' to *Sherborn*, where we rested one Night,
 ' and very early the next Morning we
 ' reached *Houden*; but as both the Foot-
 ' man and myself were Strangers to the
 ' Country, we soon lost our Way. I
 ' would have procured a Guide from a lit-
 ' tle Inn where we baited at the last men-
 ' tioned Town; but, he saying, that he
 ' was certain of going right, and that the
 ' taking of a Guide might be a Means to
 ' assist our Enemies in their Pursuit of us,
 ' I relinquished it; especially as I had
 ' learnt, that we were not above twenty
 ' Miles from our desired Port. We now
 ' rode several Miles without knowing whe-
 ' ther we went right or wrong; 'till at last
 ' meeting with a Shepherd, we found,
 ' that we had gone above a dozen Miles
 ' out of our Way: However, he directed
 ' us, how to recover our Road again, and
 ' therefore told us, to make up to that
 ' Wood, where the young Ladies found
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me; through which, he said, there was a Horse-Way, and at the End of it, we should come into a Road that led to *Wighton*.

‘ I had perceived several Times before, that the Fellow who was with me, looked very earnestly at me: But as he had always behaved himself with the greatest Respect, it gave me no Concern: though I have Reason to recollect it since, and to wonder, that I did not take more Notice of what appeared so obvious.

‘ We had not rode above a Quarter of Mile in the Wood, before he pretended, that my Horse had got something in his Foot, and alighting, tied his to a Tree, desiring me to get down, while he pulled a Flint out, that he said stuck in the Horse’s Hoof. I got off accordingly, when he tied my Horse also to a Tree, saying, that if he should happen to get away, out of my Hand, we should lose him in the Wood: No sooner had he done this, than drawing out a Pistol, and cocking it, (for Mr. *Sparks* had given him his Pistols, to defend us) he swore, he would shoot me, if I did not go along with him; and I, all trembling and amazed, was obliged

' obliged to comply : When entering into
 ' the thick of the Wood, he led me to a
 ' Place where a great Tree had been felled.
 ' —Here he told me, I must deliver him
 ' the Purse of Gold I had from Mr. *Sparks*,
 ' for he had seen him give it me, when his
 ' Horse was lamed on the Road. I com-
 ' plied with his Request; and he then told
 ' me, that he must have my Cloaths, which
 ' were a Riding-Jacket and Coat, that
 ' were trimmed with Silver-Lace. I beg-
 ' ged of him to desist from taking them,
 ' but the more earnestly I entreated him,
 ' the more vehemently he swore, he would
 ' have them; so that at last, I was obliged
 ' to pull them off: Then taking out a
 ' large Knife, he cut the Lace of my Stays,
 ' and also my Petticoat-Strings; upon
 ' which, both fell to the Ground. I then
 ' grew more and more frightened, expect-
 ' ing every Moment that he would kill me,
 ' and my Terror was so great, that I scarce
 ' knew what I said or did.

' My Cloaths being thus stripped off
 ' he began to take some impudent Liber-
 ' ties with his Hands, which I resisted as
 ' well as I was able, though I was very
 ' weak and fatigued with having rode so
 ' many Miles; and finding that I would not

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' comply with his Desires, unless by main
 ' Force, he swore that Moment should be
 ' my last, if I did not consent to do as he
 ' would have me. I entreated him, gave him
 ' good Words, prayed, cried, and begged
 ' of him, not to use me ill; but he was
 ' deaf to my Entreaties, and holding the
 ' Knife in one Hand, and the Pistol cock'd
 ' in the other, swore, that he would in-
 ' stantly dispatch me, if I did not let him
 ' do what he pleased. I fell on my Knees,
 ' and entreated him more earnestly, if pos-
 ' sible, than before; when just as he was
 ' going to perpetrate his wicked Design,
 ' we heard the Noise of some Voices,
 ' that seemed at no great Distance from
 ' us, and immediately after, a Dog open-
 ' ing, we heard the Cry of a whole Pack
 ' of Hounds in full Chace, which by the
 ' Sound, seemed to be making towards
 ' the Place we were in.'

" O Law, Papa!" says *Louisa*, " it
 " was certainly Mr. *White* a hunting: I
 " heard that he was out that Morning,
 " and heartily wish, that he had come up
 " to this Gentlewoman's Assistance."—"I
 " wish so to" said Mr. *Merit*; " but pray
 " suffer her to proceed."

VOL. I.

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' The

' The Fellow now seemed to me to be
 ' as terribly frightened as myself; he look-
 ' ed as white as a Sheet, and trembled
 ' like an Aspen-Leaf: I verily believe,
 ' that if the Pistol had been his only Wea-
 ' pon, I could easily have taken it from
 ' him; but the large drawn Knife, which
 ' he grasped in the same Hand as the o-
 ' ther, was what I feared most; and it was
 ' that which prevented me from crying
 ' out: For I knew, that he durst not kill
 ' me with the former, as the Report, on its
 ' going off, would have alarmed the Hun-
 ' ters, that were now in the Wood.

' The Fellow scarce knew what to do,
 ' or whether it were best for him to take
 ' to his Horse, or wait till those we heard
 ' in the Wood, were gone past us; but as
 ' the Hounds were presently again at
 ' Fault, after their entering the Wood,
 ' and we heard the Men keep beating a-
 ' bout, it is very probable, that he thought,
 ' they might chance to be soon up with us;
 ' therefore, laying down his Pistol on the
 ' Ground, he pulled a large Cord out of
 ' his Pocket, and bound me down to the
 ' Trunk of the Tree that I was found tied
 ' too: Swearing horribly all the Time, in

a low muttering Voice, that if I offered to make the least Noise, he would stab me.

‘ Having done this, he took his Knife, and cut my Stays and quilted Petticoat to Pieces in an Instant; and giving them a Toss among the Bushes, he rolled up my laced Jacket and Petticoat, and taking off a Belt that he had about his Waist; bound them up with it; then he he told me, that he would go a little Way, till the Hunters were gone by; but swore, if I cried out, or endeavoured to get loose, that, on his Return, he would certainly kill me.

‘ What became of him afterwards I know not; but I thought, that I heard him set off a full Gallop with the two Horses: Though I was so terribly frightened, that I durst not venture to trust my Ears, lest being deceived by them, I should lose my Life on his Return. I heard the Hunters for some Time after, but they seemed to beat away farther and farther from me, so that at last I could hear no more of them.

' I now lay in a miserable Condition,
 ' and a most painful Situation, for the
 ' Bark and Knobs of the Tree hurt me
 ' very much: and he had bound me to it so
 ' tight, that the Cords cut deep into my
 ' Flesh and hurt me exceedingly. While
 ' I lay in this Anguish I fainted away with
 ' Pain; and must be a considerable Time
 ' before I came to myself again: When I
 ' was in the utmost Amaze, as at first I
 ' I knew not where I was, nor what had
 ' happened to me.

' On recovering myself a little, I tried
 ' to get loose, but in vain; however, while
 ' I was struggling with my Bands, I heard
 ' the Sound of some Horses coming, which
 ' again renewed my Fears, as I apprehend-
 ' ed he was returning to compleat his
 ' villainous Purposes; but, to my great
 ' Joy, I presently afterwards distinguished
 ' the Voices of some Women talking to-
 ' gether. This gave me Courage; and I
 ' set up as loud a Cry as I possibly could,
 ' though my Voice was so weak and faint
 ' that I was afraid at first I should not be
 ' heard; but, happily, I soon found the
 ' Horses stop, and presently saw these two
 ' Ladies and their Servant come up to me

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who soon set me at Liberty. The Joy on finding myself released deprived me of my Senses, and I swooned away a second Time; but by their kind Assistance, I was, I believe, soon recovered again.'

Miss *Watkins* having thus finished her Relation, Mr. *Merit* asked her 'how long she thought that she had lain in that Condition?' to which she replied, 'that it must be about three Hours, as near as she could guess.' 'Then certainly, Madam,' says he, 'the Villain must have been got far enough off; though I wish that you had met with Assistance in Time, to have had him punished. I hope, nevertheless, that he is not out of the Reach of Justice; and that it may one Day or another overtake him.'

Mr. *Merit* then enquired of her what Course she intended to take: To which she replied, 'that if he pleased to give her Leave to stay a little in his House, she would write to Mr. *Sparks* to let him know where she was, and what had befallen her; and wait the Return.' Mr. *Merit* desired her to set instantly about it, as there was no Time to lose, for fear that

Mr. *Sparks* being recovered of his Wounds, might be set out to his Mother's after her. Also requesting her to give Mr. *Sparks* an Invitation to come thither; for he had formerly had some Knowledge of his Father; and said, that they were welcome to make his House their own, as long as it suited their Conveniency.

Whereupon, Miss *Watkins* returned him many Thanks for this, and all the other Favours she had received: When, retiring to her Chamber, she set about writing to Mr. *Sparks*, according to Mr. *Merit's* Injunction.

C H A P.

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C H A P. XI.

What happened to Will Ramble in Nottinghamshire.

WE left *Will Ramble* in his new Employment of keeping Sheep for the Farmer, and it is now high Time for us to see how he went on. He was very awkward at first at any Farming Business; but being a Youth of great Agility and Dexterity, he soon became acquainted with several Branches of Husbandry, and grew very expert at his Work. However, the Change from Study and Recreation, dainty Meals and soft Beds; to the laborious Drudgery of Plow and Cart, one Meal a Day (at Supper Time) and a hard Flock to lie on, was too intolerable for *Will* to bear. And, indeed, Nothing could induce him to undergo it, but that which the Poet says overcomes all Things. Love that compelled *Hercules* to work at the Distaff for the Sake of his admired *Omphale*, caused *Will Ramble* to drudge at the laborious Toil of Agriculture and Husbandry, for the Sake of his endearing *Peggy*, for

so was the only Daughter of the Farmer called, where *Will* lived.

This Lass that had taken *Will's* Affection, was of a brown Complexion, hale, strong, lusty, and well-featured : Her ruddy Cheeks exceeded the deepest Rose in their Vermillion Colour; and her Teeth were whiter than the Milk she drew, each Morning and Evening, from the Dugs of *Mully* her favourite Cow. Besides this, she was exceeding sweet tempered, and even good-natured to a Fault; having suffered by her easy Disposition, in being seduced to part with her Virginity to *Thomas* her Father's Man, as they were returning from a Dancing-Bout, whither they had been together, at a Town about three Miles distant. However, as no ill Consequences attended the Loss of her Maidenhead, it remained a Secret to every one else, beside themselves. Though his slighting her afterwards occasioned her to take a great Fancy to *William*, on Account of his Youth, Handsomeness, and genteel Carriage.

Will being now in his eighteenth Year, began to shew Signs of a very amorous Complexion ; and it is no Wonder that he thought such a fresh, blooming Girl as

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Peggy was, a fit Object of Desire: And as she had given up her Modesty with her Chastity, so she was as forward as *William* could wish for. This being his first Attempt in making Love, we must own that he was somewhat bashful: But, however, as she liked *Will* wonderfully well, and indeed much better than she had done her former Lover; she found Means and Opportunities to surmount his Bashfulness, and gratify the utmost of his Desires. For as she found by his awkward Behaviour on this Occasion, that *Will* had never before been initiated in the Mysteries of Love, so she met with no Difficulty in making him believe that the Violence of her Passion had occasioned him to triumph over her Virginity.

Will really loved the Girl very well, and did not entertain the least Thought of her deceiving him on any Account. Therefore he would have given Credit to her even in a more improbable Matter than what we have here related; whereas he knew nothing to the contrary of her Assertions, so he had no Objection to make against the Veracity of them. And he might perhaps have remained a much longer Time in Ignorance, had not an Accident, which we are about

to relate, dispelled the Mist that had hitherto hung over his Eyes and Senses.

Will continued in this laborious Service about three Months longer, being more induced, as we before hinted, to remain therein, from the sweet Rewards he met with by *Peggy's* kind Gratification of his Passion, than from any pecuniary or interesting Motives. But though Fruition had not abated his Desire, his Constitution was as yet but tender; and *Peggy* being a brisk mettled Girl, he found the Toil in his Master's Service and the Drudgery in her's, too hard for him to support together. And as he was not yet arrived at his full Strength so he could not perform every Way; for indeed he had laboured so hard in both Occupations, as to be reduced almost to a Skeleton.

Though *Peggy* was very fond of *Will*, yet for certain prudential Reasons, the chief of which was the Fear of being *blowed*, as it is vulgarly termed; or of having the Secret between them betrayed, she was all along obliged to keep up a good Correspondence with her old Sweetheart *Thomas*; and was forced to gratify his Desires in the Way of Love, whenever he requested her.

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But, he having obtained Leave of his Master to go a Month into *Derbyshire* to see his Father that was ill, made it two before he returned : During which *Peggy* very kindly condescended to admit *Will* to supply his Place in her Embraces, and soon after found herself with Child by him.

Peggy was very sensible to whom she ought to attribute her Pregnancy ; yet as *Will* was not in a Condition to maintain her and a Child with his small Wages, she thought fit to let *Thomas* bear the Charges: As she judged, that he having had a Finger in the Pye, was the best able to support her Burthen. Neither did she make any Hesitation about the Veracity of laying it to him, as she reckoned it to be a just Retaliation for his having wheedled her out of her Virginity.

Coming Home late across some Fields one Evening from Milking, after *Thomas's* Return from *Derbyshire*, she met him also coming from Work ; and took this Opportunity to acquaint him of the Manner in which she found herself. Giving him to understand that he must look out in Time, to provide for her and the Child. This News was not quite so agreeable to

Thomas, as when the Wife of a wealthy Alderman acquaints her Duck that his Labours has procured him Hopes of having an Heir to his Riches. But however, he scratched his Ears, and said, “ if it was “ so, it could not be helped, but bid her “ come to him in the Barn, where she had “ set her Milk, and he would consult with “ her about it.”

This Barn, which was not very far from the House, being only across a large Yard, was the Place where these two Lovers generally met together to make their Oblations in to *Venus*; and where *Will* himself had often tasted the Delights of Love with his charming *Peggy*. But as she was a Girl of very great Art for a Country Lass, she had managed Matters so well hitherto, as to keep both these Lovers in Ignorance of the Favours, that she so kindly bestowed at different Times to each of them. And this natural Address of hers, might set her in Competition with some of our Ladies of Fashion, who, moving in a much higher Sphere, have more Opportunities and much properer Places of Affignation at their Command, wherein to recompence the Assiduity of their different Lovers, than *Peggy* could be

be supposed to find out at a lonely Farm-House.

Will coming Home before these Lovers, and being very weary with his Day's Work, had taken his Supper, and afterwards went to lie down on some Hay that was at the farther End of the Barn; for his Bed in the House had not as yet been made for him. Here he fell asleep, and so continued till the Entrance of *Peggy* and *Thomas*; who began so loud a Parley together, little thinking any one was there, that it waked him; when knowing their Voices he listened to their Debate.

Thomas, it seems, upon second Thoughts, had recollected that *Peggy's* Father was much more able to maintain the Child that she was big with, than himself. He therefore was for persuading her to keep the Matter a Secret, till it could be concealed no longer; and that then he would quit her Father's Service and go off, leaving him to maintain her and the Child. And promised, that during his Absence, he would do all that was in his Power to assist her, by sending her whatever Money he could spare out of his Wages; which Method he urged would be better than her
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flinging both herself and the Child upon his Hands to provide for, who had such small Comings-in.

Peggy, on the contrary, pleaded strongly for his marrying her, and by that Means taking away the Disgrace which he had brought upon her. But *Thomas* demurring upon this Point, she threatened to compel him either to do that, or to maintain her and her Child; often upbraiding him with having deprived her of her Virginity. He, in a dry sneering Way, asked her how long she had lost it, to which she in a great Rage replied, " You know you Rogue! " you do so, as well as I, that you got it " under the Hedge in the common Fields " that Night when we were coming from " Dancing at *Tuxford*." Many more Words followed upon this, but not worthy our relating here: However, at last both Parties withdrew to their Beds, without altering their Resolutions.

Will, who had lain all this Time listening like a Sow in Beans, finding them gone, at last crept softly out and stole to his Chamber: Indeed he had not been much missed out of the House, as his Dame thought that he was gone to Bed, which
he

he often did, without its being made for him.

Though *Will* was very weary, as we have said before, and had only taken a Nap of about two Hours in the Barn, yet the Surprize at what he had heard, and the many Thoughts that occurred to him thereupon, prevented him from taking a Wink more all Night.

After much ruminating upon the Matter, he determined within himself to get away from thence as soon as possibly he could : For being now convinced not only of *Peggy's* Deceitfulness, in pretending Affection to him, but also in keeping a Correspondence with *Thomas*, it very much lessened his Affection for her. Though if she had informed him of her Circumstances, and averred that he had been the Occasion of them, his Compassion would hardly have permitted him to have entertained any Thoughts of leaving her in such a Condition ; as he knew that *Mr. Merit* his Guardian, might be obliged to contribute to the Maintainance of her and the Child, till he himself should come at Age. But as this was not the Case at present, and that she had never mentioned a Syllable to him of her

her being with Child ; so he feared that if *Thomas* persisted in his Resolution of leaving her, then she might be induced to lay that to him which, probably, was not of his own begetting, as they two had kept so long a Correspondence together before ever he entered the Family.

However, *Will* took Care not to give *Peggy* the least Insight into his Design of quitting his Service ; for as he perceived that she was really very fond of him, so he very much feared that she would insist on accompanying him. To say the Truth, *Peggy* loved him much better than she did *Thomas* ; as is evident by her laying the Child to the latter, to screen *Will* from the Charge : And which may be very well accounted for, from the same Causes as makes a Woman fonder of a handsome, sprightly young Fellow, than of one that is older, and not so comely.

Not many Days after this Event, *Will* took an Opportunity to acquaint his Master, that he should be glad if he could let him have some Money to go to the next Market Town, to buy him some Linen, and other Things that he wanted. The Master would fain have persuaded him to let his
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Dame buy them for him, saying, that she was more experienced in such Sort of Dealing : But *Will*, not relishing this Proposal, as it did not suit his Purpose, the Farmer gave him all the Money, that was due to him, excepting about three Shillings ; and *Will* set out the next Morning without taking any Leave of *Peggy*, for fear of betraying his Design ; as he was sensible that it would give her more Uneasiness than he was willing to be an Eye-Witness to.

On his leaving his Master's, *Will* did not go to the Town which he had told them of, but travelled several Miles a quite different Way till he came to *Mansfield*, lying on the main Road from *London*, which is a pretty large Market Town. Here he rested the first Night, and hearing that on the next Day, being Market Day, there was a *Mountebank* to come into the Place, his Curiosity prompted him to stay, and take Part of the Diversion, that the Doctor and his Attendants afforded : He never as yet having had an Opportunity of seeing any such Pastime, as he was told would be there exhibited, when the Doctor mounted his Stage.

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Accordingly, at the Time of the *Mountebank's* coming, which was signified to the Populace by his *Merry-Andrew's* going about with a Trumpet, *Will* took his Station among the Croud : And was so highly delighted with the Wit and Mirth that *Andrew* afforded, and the exceeding Agility of the Rope-Dancer and Tumbler, that he could heartily have wished to have made one among them.

The Diversion being over, and it being too late to go forward that Night, *Will* returned to the same House to lodge, which he had lain at the Night before. Here all the Discourse for that Evening was, about the Doctor and his Performances, and, amongst other Things, it was related, that he wanted a Lad to be his Servant, and attend him on his Journies. On hearing this, *Will* pricked up his Ears, and resolved to proffer his Service to him.

Accordingly, the next Morning he went to the Inn, where the Doctor put up, before the Time of his setting out, and offered himself to him.

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The Doctor eyed *Will* very attentively ; and perceiving that he was a slim, genteel, comely Youth, liked him very well : And as he was used to Disguises, he thought he saw somewhat in his Countenance and Behaviour, more than was commonly to be met with under a coarse Doublet. However, he took no Notice at present ; but only asked *Will* where he came from, and what he could do ? to which *Will* answered, “ that he came from a Town about six “ Miles off, that he could look after “ and dress his Horses, and do what else he “ should set him about.” “ Is that all,” says the Doctor, “ that you are fit for ?” “ No, Sir,” replied *Will*, “ I can both “ read and write, if that will be of any “ Service to you.” This confirmed the Doctor in his former Sentiments, that *Will* was not really what he appeared to be ; however, he did not ask him any more Questions at that Time, because he would not put him too much out of Countenance, as he perceived him blush very much at his Interrogations ; but bargaining with him for seven Pounds a Year, and giving him a Crown Earnest, he directly took him into his Service : And the Occurrences that *Will Ramble* met with therein, the following Book will exhibit an ample Account of.

T H E

THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
WILL RAMBLE.

BOOK III.

*Containing divers extraordinary Occurrences,
that befell Will Ramble, and several other
Persons.*

CHAP. I.

*The Adventures of the Mountebank, and his
Company, at an Inn at Nottingham.*

WILL Ramble being now entered into
the Mountebank's Service, his Master
ordered a new genteel Frock to be made
for him; and it was with a great deal of
Pleasure, that *Will* flung off his rough Jac-
ket: For, to say the Truth, he still re-
tained

tained a Spark of Pride in him, and liked to go well dressed.

The Doctor finding *Will* to be a very promising Youth, soon took a great Liking to him, and entrusted him with the Secret of preparing his Medicines, in which Office, he was of great Service; for having a nimble Hand, and their Medicaments consisting but of a few Simples, he soon grew as expert in making up these as his Master. Besides this, *Will* was very active upon the Stage, and could hold a tolerable Dialogue even with *Merry-Andrew* himself.

The Doctor's Retinue consisted of his *Merry-Andrew*, a Tumbler, and Monkey, (the two last performing on the slack Rope) and *Will Ramble*. They travelled about from Town to Town, the Doctor having generally five or six Stages erected in different Places, where he exhibited the Performances of himself and Company, and dispersed his Medicines on different Market-Days.

One of the Doctor's Stages, during his Progress, was at *Nottingham*, where they put up at a large Inn, the Landlord whereof had a Wife and Daughter that were remarkable for their Beauty, though not for

for their Chastity; which, if any Credit may be given to the celebrated Lady *Fame*, the latter had been often violated with the military Gentry, that were frequently quartered at their House.

The Doctor and his Attendants, on their Arrival at this Inn, received a great many Glances and Ogles from these two Females; which, perhaps, would not have been quite so agreeable to the Landlord himself, if he had perceived them, as to these New-Comers, all of whom were of very amorous Complexions. The Doctor was a well made, likely, black Man, of a middle Age; his *Merry-Andrew* was a fair young Fellow; and the Tumbler was a little dapper active Spark, suited by Nature to his Profession: As for *Will Ramble*, we have described him before; and shall only add here, that he was the youngest and handsomest of the Company.

As all the Females in this Inn, from the Landlady herself down to the Cook-Maid, were professed Devotees to *Venus*, the Arrival of so many agreeable Persons of the other Sex, that had as warm Constitutions as themselves, occasioned no small Joy among them. Each one endeavoured to ex-

ceed

ceed the other in Complacence and Civility to the Company, excepting the Landlord and the Men-Servants: The former being under some Concern for his Brows, and the others, seeing the likely Appearance these Strangers made, and knowing they proposed to continue some Time among them, could not avoid being affected with that worst of Passions, called Jealousy, as they feared being deprived of their several Enamorata's.

The Landlady immediately conducted the Doctor into her best Parlour, behind the Bar; and the Daughter very officiously waited on the *Merry-Andrew*, the Tumbler, and *Will* in the Kitchen, to see that the Servants obeyed their Commands in bringing them what they called for.

Will Ramble having been a little Time in the Mountebank's Service, had therein, among other Things, acquired one Qualification that is exceeding useful to any young Man, who has either his Fortune to make, or to mend in the World, that is, a competent Degree of Assurance: An Accomplishment purchased at a great Expence by most of our modern Persons of Distinction, in their Tour through *Europe*, and is generally

nerally the only Qualification they bring Home with them from their Travels. But *Will* had the Fortune to obtain this Accomplishment without being at the Pains and Expence of visiting foreign Parts, by only attending the Mountebank, his Master, in his Progress through some of our domestic Counties. And, indeed, I do not well see how a Youth of his Genius and Spirit, could avoid possessing himself of such a valuable Acquisition, by travelling in such good Company; that were all professed Masters of Impudence, and made it a general Rule among them, never to be put out of Countenance on any Occasion whatsoever.

Here I must indulge my Vanity a little by hinting a Proposal, which I apprehend may be vastly serviceable to my Country as, by being put in Execution, it may save this Nation some Thousands of Pounds that are now annually carried out of it: That our young Gentlemen of Quality, instead of being permitted to travel into foreign Countries, should be obliged first to make the Tour of their own, under the Inspection of some Mountebank, or Quack-Doctor whereby they might, at least, become initiated in Impudence, if not acquire a

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great an Assurance as they commonly bring home with them from Abroad. And also the Ladies, by making a Progress through certain Parts of this Island, with some Companies of our strolling Players, they might likewise obtain as much of this necessary Accomplishment, as is sufficient for any Woman of Quality to make a Figure with.

Indeed, I apprehend only one Objection, that can be made against the foregoing Scheme; which is, that such Pupils will neither learn new Fashions, nor new Languages, by the Manner of Travelling that I have here proposed. But as their own Genius, if they have any, will readily assist them in the former, on seeing the different Habits that are worn in the several Parts of this Kingdom; and that the latter is seldom acquired Abroad to any Degree of Perfection, by our young People of Quality, so I think it may very well dispensed with. However sanguine my Wishes may be, that some such Scheme was be put in Execution, for the Interest of my native Country; yet, as I have no great Expectation of this ever meeting with the Approbation of my Superiors, I shall immediately quit all the airy Views of a Projector; and, re-assuming

the Sagacity of an Author, proceed in my Narrative.

It was about Eleven o'Clock in the Morning when the *Mountebank* and his Retinue arrived at the Inn; for they came not many Miles; and the Doctor immediately ordered a handsome Dinner, and invited the Landlord, his Wife and Daughter, to partake of it. As for his Attendants, there was a Buttock of Beef in the Pot, and a Saddle of Mutton before the Kitchen Fire, whereon he thought they might very well appease their Hunger.

His *Merry Andrew* was a very dexterous Fellow: Could beat a Drum, found a Trumpet, fiddle, dance and tumble, exceeding well; was very ready-witted, and, when the Doctor was at Home, he served in his Shop as a Journeyman. Besides which, being a handsome clear-skinned Fellow, he was of extraordinary Service to his Master, both at Home and in his Travels, in the laudable Occupation of a Pimp: Though in this, *Merry Andrew* would oftentimes be his Master's Taster; and generally helped himself to the first Cut, if the Meat was young, tender, and delicate, or any other ways agreeable to his Palate.

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The many Services he had performed in this last Occupation, made him a great Favourite with the Doctor; and also rendered him (what all Favourites generally are to their Patrons) very saucy. For though it was a Part of his Character to be free with his Master, when he had got his party-coloured Jacket on; yet he would often assume it at other Times, when the Doctor thought it not so becoming; and nothing but his former Merit, as a Procurer, could have made his Master put up with it.

Andrew was a very liquorish-mouth'd dainty Fellow; and on seeing two Fowls riding the Spit for his Master, and never a one for himself, he began to be very free of his Jibes and Jokes about it in the Kitchen: But not finding them have any Effect among the Audience there, he ran into the Parlour, where his Master was taking a Whet with the Landlord and Landlady, and asked him very freely, what he had ordered for his Servants Dinner?—Whereupon the Landlady directly replied, that there was a nice Buttock of Beef, and a fine saddle of Mutton getting ready in the Kitchen.—‘Ay,’ says the Doctor, ‘sure
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' you may all make a hearty Meal of two
 ' such good Joints.' ' But, Sir,' says
Andrew, ' are we to have no Fowl, I could
 ' like a Fowl very well.'—' Mr. *An-*
drew,' replies the Landlady, ' we have
 ' no more in the House at present, be-
 ' sides those two that are upon the Spit for
 ' your Master's Dinner.' ' What, Sir,' says
 the Droll, ' you eat two Fowls, and allow
 ' *Andrew* ne'er a one, when there are such
 ' Plenty of them flying about the House?'
 ' What Plenty does the Man mean,' re-
 plies the Landlady, in a Sort of a Pet: ' I
 ' am sure we have no more left out of the
 ' half Dozen, that we bought t'other Day,
 ' than those two at the Fire; for our Hen-
 ' Roost was robbed last Week.'—' Oh!'
 says *Andrew*, ' then, perhaps, these are a
 ' new Brood; for I am sure they are flying
 ' about in the Kitchen and have beat all
 ' the Pewter and Brass off the Shelves.'
 ' If so,' answered the Landlady, ' you
 ' shall have one killed presently for your
 ' Dinner.' Upon this, she immediately
 hastened into the Kitchen to see the Fowls
 he spoke of, hearing a violent Noise and
 Uproar at a Distance: But on her En-
 trance, she found *Dorothy* the House-maid,
Tom the Chamberlain, *Susan* the Cook-
 maid, and *Joe* the Ostler, all at high Words
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and Fifty-Cuffs together; with the Pewter, Plates, Dishes, Candlesticks, and Sauce-pans, strewed all over the Place: And the Jack standing still, while the Victuals that should have been roasting, was almost burnt before the Fire.

She instantly perceived what Fowl *Andrew* had meant; as she heard whole Vol-lies of foul Words flying about, notwithstanding her Presence. Whereupon, directly raising her Voice to the highest Pitch, she began to bellow out, 'What the Devil is the Meaning of all this Uproar? Do you think, you Parcel of d-----d Rogues and Whores, that I am to have all my Pewter and Brasses beat to Pieces, and the Gentleman's Dinner spoiled at the Fire for you.'—On saying this, she moved forward a few Steps, and gave *Susan*, the Cook-maid, such a Blow over the Chops as sent two of her Teeth down her Throat, and a whole mouthful of Blood after them. The Cook-maid directly turned again at her Mistress, and aiming all her Vengeance on a fine lac'd Cap, that she had on her Head, instantly tore it off and demolished it. The Mistress all in a Flame, on having her Finery destroyed in this Manner, flew at *Susan*; and fastning

both her Claws in her Hair, dragged her to the Ground. *Joe* the Ostler, was trying to deliver *Susan* his Favourite, out of the Landlady's Clutches, when her Husband entered the Kitchen; being drawn thither by the Uproar, that he had heard from thence, in the Room behind the Bar, where he had been sitting with the Doctor.

On seeing the Ostler and his Wife struggling together, the Landlord dealt a heavy Blow at the former, which he returning again very briskly, a fierce Battle ensued between these two; but *Joe*, being a strong young Fellow, soon brought his Antagonist to the Ground. Upon this, the Landlady ran directly into the Room to the Doctor, with her Hair all about her Ears, and prayed him to come and assist her Husband in the Kitchen: for she was afraid he would be murdered by his own Servants. The Doctor hastened thither, and by the Assistance of his *Merry-Andrew*, the *Tumbler*, and *Will*, who had stood hitherto as idle Spectators, soon parted the Combatants, yet it was some Time before Peace could be restored among them; for high Words subsisted for a long Time after: But they seemed too much weakened with
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their last Engagement, to enter into a new one at Fifty-Cuffs.

Though the Doctor's Attendants had been only Lookers on, during this Fray, yet it was them that had been the Occasion of it. For *Susan*, the Cook-maid, being a very likely Lass, the *Merry-Andrew* had attacked her Lips pretty briskly since he had been in the House; the *Tumbler* followed his Example with the House-maid; and *Will* had been very free, in engaging the Landlord's Daughter in the same Manner.

Now the *Chamberlain* and *Dolly* the House-maid, with the Ostler and *Susan*, were link'd together in the Bands of Love; and could not bear the Provocation of seeing these new Comers make so free with their Mistresses, who rather seemed to give them Encouragement, than express any Dissatisfaction thereat. Though the Chamberlain and Ostler had no Room to quarrel with the Strangers, for the Liberties they took with the Women; yet, they could not forbear being displeased with their Mistresses for allowing it; and expressed their Dislike by glouting Looks, and surly Words. This the two Women resented with opprobrious Appella-

tions ; which being as readily returned by the others, soon occasioned the Candlesticks, Brasses, Plates, and other missile Weapons, to fly about the Kitchen ; so that on the Landlady's Entrance therein, she found above half the Utensils thereof displaced from the Shelves, and very much battered and bruised in the Engagement. However, all Hostilities being at Length put an End to, by the Doctor's Mediation, the several Parties adjourned to Dinner in tolerable Order. That is, first the Doctor with the Landlord and Landlady, and their Daughter, sat down to the scorched Fowls in the Room behind the Bar ; and afterwards, the Doctor's Attendants, with the Servants of the House, fell to the Beef and Mutton in the Kitchen.

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C H A P. II.

The Arrival of a great Personage at the Inn.

BY the Time that all the People of the Inn had dined, the Clock struck Three. When just as the Doctor and Landlady were going to sit down to a Pot of Coffee together, two Coaches and Six arrived, with a numerous Retinue of Servants on Horseback : This immediately put the Landlord and Landlady, and all the House, into the greatest Hurry and Confusion, to provide proper Accommodation for so large a Company.

It was a Nobleman of Distinction, that was on his Journey from *Westmoreland* to *London*, who was now arrived at the Inn. He had dispatched a Servant about two Hours before, at near fifteen Miles Distance, to give Notice of his Approach, and order the Dinner, and other necessary Preparations, in Readiness against his coming : But, unfortunately for the poor Fellow, as well as his Lordship, he had taken a Cup too much that Day on the Road, and hap-

pened to ride a dozen Miles out of the Way before he perceived his Error : Which occasioned there not being any Dinner provided, suitable for the Entertainment of so noble a Guest.

This, as we said before, caused a great Bustle at the Inn, and put all the Family in a prodigious Hurry; and also his Lordship into a most violent Rage : Who stormed, thundered, and swore about in the Inn-Yard and the House, with all that Impetuosity, Fire, and Spirit, which so eminently distinguishes an *English* Man of Quality, from any other : Whereby his Domesticks were so terrified, that not one of them dared hardly to venture near him, till his Passion was over ; which did not subside till that sharp and violent Provocative, his Hunger, was allayed by a good Dinner, that was near two Hours in preparing. At this Meal his Lordship sat about the small Time of an Hour and a Half : During which, none of his Servants could get any Thing to satisfy their Appetites, but such cold Victuals as the Mountebank's Company and the Family had left : Which they were obliged to procure as it were, by Stealth; for it would have been deemed an heinous Piece of Arrogancy,

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rogancy in any of them, to have offered to sit down to a Morfel till his Lordship had dined.

The Coach wherein this Nobleman rode carried also his Lady, and her Sister, and a Gentleman that was his Lordship's Companion ; who was much of the same Use to him, as *Merry-Andrew* was to the Mountebank ; that is, he served him for his Buffoon, his Parasite, and his Pimp. The other Coachfull consisted of the Ladies, two Pin-Stickers (commonly called their Waiting Women) and two Chamber-maids, that were Servants both to these and their Ladies also : Those on Horseback were my Lord's *German* Valet, his *French* Cook, his Groom of the Chambers, Butler, and six Servants in Livery.

At pretty near Seven o'Clock at Night, that is to say, after they had been come in almost four Hours, his Lordship's Servants sat down to Dinner : To which late Hour their Appetites being habited by long Custom, they fell to their half hot and half cold Victuals, as eagerly as a Day Labourer does, to his Meal at Noon Time ; notwithstanding they had somewhat appeased their Hunger, by the Remnants of the Buttock of

Beef, and the Saddle of Mutton, which they found in the House ready dressed.

During this Time the Man arrived, who had been dispatched before to the Inn to give Notice of his Lord's coming ; but as both Liquor and Night had overtaken him, he had been obliged to hire a Guide to conduct him hither, where he found his Lordship, and all his Attendants but himself, arrived long before him.

As the poor Fellow was very much fatigued, both with hard Riding and hard Drinking, it was thought proper that he should not see his Lordship that Night; but he having heard of the Man's Arrival, the Condition he was in, and the Manner he had lost his Way, gave Orders to the Valet to pay him his Wages and discharge him instantly. However, the Man begged so hard that it might be deferred till the next Morning, when he hoped to give a more satisfactory Account of himself ; and his Lordship at the Intercession of his Lady, and her Sister, being mollified by their Entreaties, condescended at last that the Affair should be postponed.

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The Gentleman who accompanied his Lordship, and whose Character has been before related, happened to come into the Kitchen to deliver some Orders to the Coachman, when the *Merry-Andrew* was standing by the Fire-side, dressed in his Party-coloured Jacket ; having been that Afternoon blowing his Trumpet about the Town, to give Notice of his Master's Arrival, and that he was to mount the Stage the next Day. He was now diverting the Company round him in the Kitchen, with some of his Jokes and Witticisms ; who were so attentive to the Droll's Discourse, that little Notice was taken by them of the aforesaid Gentlemen ; who calling one of my Lord's Servants aside to him, asked, somewhat loudly, whose Fool that was. *Andrew* on hearing this, replied as loud, ' Not your Fool, Sir ! nor your ' Master's.' With that, the Gentleman turning again came up to *Andrew* ; and calling him a saucy Rascal, asked him what he meant by his Master ? Who was his Master ?——' Why that great Lord with-
' in, I suppose,' says *Andrew*, ' but tho'
' he keeps a great many Fools, in party-
' coloured Cloaths, I don't belong to him :
' I am Servant to the famous Doctor *L—*,
' Professor

‘ Professor in Physic, Surgery, Chymistry,
 ‘ and Alchymistry ; Master of all the li-
 ‘ beral Arts and Sciences ; and chief Denti-
 ‘ ficator and Operator, for the Teeth, to the
 ‘ Emperor of *Monomotapa*.’

‘ Confound you and your Master to-
 ‘ gether,’ says the Gentleman, ‘ I have a
 ‘ great Mind to kick you round the Kitchen
 ‘ for an impudent Scoundrel.’ ‘ If you
 ‘ do,’ says *Andrew*, ‘ I shall certainly let
 ‘ a F——t and befoul your Toes.—But
 ‘ though you have got a lac’d Waistcoat
 ‘ on, and a Gold-button’d Coat ; I’ll sound
 ‘ a Trumpet, beat a Drum, play on the
 ‘ Fiddle, or dance a Jig with you for a
 ‘ Guinea ; and here’s the Money down.’
 Pulling a Guinea at the same Time out of
 the Side of his long Trousers, and flinging
 it on the Kitchen Dresser.

The Gentleman had no longer Patience,
 but gave *Andrew* a smart Slap on the Face ;
 which he directly returned, by lifting up
 his Leg as high as the other’s Head, and
 giving him such a Kick with the Heel of
 his Shoe upon the Jaws, as made him re-
 treat backwards to the other Side of the
 Room : But recovering himself, and catch-
 ing

ing a Whip out of one of the Nobleman's Servants Hand, that was standing by, he came forward to correct *Andrew* with it, for his Insolence; who seeing his Purpose, suddenly wrenched it from him with a strong Jerk, and leaped over his Head. *Andrew*, having now got the Whip in his own Hand, was going to bestow on the other what had been design'd for himself; but the Servants called out to him to hold, telling him the other was a Gentleman, and their Lord's Companion: Upon which, *Andrew* staid his Hand, saying, 'if he is a Gentleman, I am sure he must be a Fool, to disturb me in my Profession.'

The Gentleman not bearing to suffer this Usage, flew into my Lord's Apartment to fetch his Sword, and run *Andrew* through the Body; but he, being apprised of his Design, very wisely fled away to his own Room, and locked himself in. As my Lord and the two Ladies were very much surprized at Mr. *Seabrook's* (for that was the Gentleman's Name) being in such a Passion, they would not permit him to take his Sword; but his Lordship himself went into the Kitchen, to know the Cause of this Outrage, and who had dared to affront him. Being there informed that it

was

was the Mountebank's *Merry-Andrew*, he immediately sent some of his Servants to fetch him into his Presence. But *Andrew* was too cunning for them, and would by no Means be decoyed out of his Fastness: As he dreaded being exposed to the Rage of my Lord himself, though he heeded not the other's Anger, whom he very ignorantly had mistaken for one of his Lordship's chief Domesticks.

My Lord knew nothing, before this of the Mountebank and his Company being at the Inn; and finding *Andrew* was not easily to be come at, he sent for the Doctor himself into the Room to him, and Mr. *Seabrook*, and the two Ladies. The Doctor was somewhat surprized at this hasty Summons; yet as he imagined it was to draw a Tooth, prepare a smelling Bottle, or perform some other Part of his Business, he began to feel in his Pockets for the Case of Instruments, that he generally carried about him: But on his Entrance in the Room was greatly astonished to hear Mr. *Seabrook* lay a violent Charge against his *Merry-Andrew*, for an Assault and Abuse, and my Lord asked him, ' by what Authority he kept a Pack of Fools to affront Gentlemen?'

The

The Doctor replied, 'that he was a licentiate Physician; and as he travelled the Country for his Livelihood, so he was obliged to keep Folks to entertain and divert the common People.—That he had always thought his *Andrew* to be a very civil, honest, facetious Fellow, and was sorry if he had given any Affront to the Gentleman, as he was sure it must proceed from Mistake and Ignorance of his Quality: But that, if his Lordship pleased, *Andrew* should be obliged to ask his Pardon, or he would instantly discharge him from his Service, and afterwards the Gentleman might deal with him as he thought proper.' My Lord and Mr. *Seabrook* insisted upon this Satisfaction, which the Doctor promised they should have: When, making his Obedience, he went to his own Room, and sent for *Andrew*.

Mr. *Merryman*, on his Appearance before his Master, related the whole of the Matter to him: saying also, 'That if the other was a Gentleman, he was sure that he must be a Fool, for taking any Affront from one that was obliged to be saucy by his Profession.' 'That may be,

' be, very probably,' says his Master,
 ' but then, *Andrew*, as he is a richer Fool
 ' than e'er a one of us, I have promised
 ' that you should give him Satisfaction by
 ' asking his Pardon: And you must either
 ' do it, or I must instantly discharge you.'
 ' Do what you please for that, Sir,' says
Andrew, ' but I don't see why one Fool
 ' should be obliged to ask another's Par-
 ' don for doing him no Injury ; I am sure
 ' he struck me first, and as to what I did,
 ' any one would have done the same, as it
 ' was only in my own Defence.'

' No Matter for that, *Andrew*,' says the
 Doctor, ' he is a Gentleman, and you must
 ' submit to your Betters ; and I advise you
 ' to it as a Friend. Perhaps the Nobleman
 ' may think fit to gratify you for your
 ' Submission ; but you must certainly ex-
 ' pect Nothing, but to feel the Effects of
 ' his Wrath, from your standing out.'

Andrew, through his Master's Persua-
 sions, was at last obliged to truckle, tho'
 with great Reluctance. The Doctor con-
 ducted him into my Lord's Room, where,
 with a low Obeysance to the Company,
Andrew asked Pardon of Mr. *Seabrook*, and
 declared, that it was through Ignorance of
 his

his Quality that he had made so free with him. Upon this, my Lord filled him out a Glas of Wine, and *Andrew* drank to all their Healths. My Lord then proceeded to ask him some Questions, and whether he could shew them any Diverſion : To this the Doctor answered : That he believed, his *Andrew* and Tumbler to be as good Performers, in their Way, as any in *Europe*, which his Lordship should presently be satisfied of, if he would permit them the Honour to perform before him.

My Lord, being a Man that took great Delight in such Sort of Entertainments, and thinking it would be a Diverſion for the Ladies, desired, that *Andrew* and the Tumbler might prepare themselves to act in the largest Room in the House, where he and his Company would come to see their Dexterity ; Giving *Andrew* half a Crown for himself and the Tumbler to drink together, before they began : And desired the Doctor, in the mean while, to sit down, and take a Glas with him and Mr. *Seabrook*. The Mountebank readily accepted of the Honour, while his *Andrew* and Tumbler got themselves and the Room prepared to exhibit their Performances before his Lordship, and the Company that were with him.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

*Some other extraordinary Adventures which
happened at the Inn.*

IN about half an Hour's Time every Thing was in Readiness; and the Tumbler and *Merry-Andrew* began to shew their Dexterity before my Lord, the two Ladies, and Mr. *Seabrook*; as also the Landlord, Landlady, and their Daughter, and all the Rest of the People in the Inn whom his Lordship graciously admitted to be Partakers in his present Diversion; wherewith he was so highly delighted, that, at the End, he contributed very handsomely to the two Performers, as did Mr. *Seabrook* and the two Ladies: After which, such of them as could eat, adjourned to Supper, and at last, they all betook themselves to Bed.

Early the next Morning, the Nobleman and his Retinue proceeded on their Journey to *London*; his Lordship having first agreed to pardon the Servant, that had lost his Way the Day before, for his Fault in getting in Liquor; and, in the Afternoon, the

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the Doctor and Company exhibited their Performances in the Market-Place, to the great Satisfaction and Entertainment of the whole Town.

Nothing remarkable happened now till Supper-Time: When *Will Ramble*, having played his Part so well these two Days past with the Landlord's Daughter, as entirely to gain her Affection, was made as happy by her, as he could wish, in his own Room, while the rest of the Company were taking their Evening's Draught after Supper; and *Will* also obtained the Promise of being admitted to take Part of a Night's Lodging with her, if he could find the Way to her Chamber, when the rest of the Family were in Bed.

All the House being gone to rest, and most of them fallen a-sleep; *Will*, having a Mind for another Meal at the Banquet of Love, stole softly out of his Chamber, and endeavoured to find that of the Landlord's Daughter: But having no Light, and being quite a Stranger to the House, he mistook that of *Dolly*, the Maid's for it; who being charmed with the Dexterity and active Performances of the *Merry-Andrew*, had given him the same Af-

Assignment as her young Mistress had done to *Will*, and, therefore, had left her Door a little open, for his more easy Admission.

Will finding the Door ajar, thought he was pretty right; and groping about in the Dark for the Bed, called in a soft whispering Tone: "My Dear!—where are you?" When he heard a Woman's Voice answering him in the same Manner: Whereupon, he presently found out the Bed; and directly entering it, was very warmly received in *Dolly's* Embraces.

Not long after *Andrew* arose; and seeking for the Chamber, came to the Door: But on finding it locked, whereas, by Appointment, it was to have been left open, he concluded that he was wrong; and, therefore, proceeded farther in his Search, till he came to the Room where the Landlord's Daughter lay, in Expectation of *William's* Approach to her longing Arms.

On finding this Door open, *Andrew* entered; and thinking he was right, locked it again after him. The young Woman lay very still, for fear of being over-heard by those that lay in the next Room to her;

and *Andrew*, having gave her some Kiffes, was undressing himself, when he perceived the Light of a Candle glance through the Key-Hole, and presently Somebody gave a loud Bounce at the Door: Which, either being not shut quite close, or the Lock not being very good, flew open; when, to her great Surprize, she saw her Father entering the Room, and *Andrew* standing by her Bed-Side, in his Shirt.

As she was very much amazed at this unexpected Sight, she gave a loud Skream; and her Father, on seeing *Andrew*, asked him, what Business he had there, and whether he was come to debauch his Daughter. *Andrew* firmly denied the Charge, as, indeed, he had no such Design; and said, that being obliged to go down Stairs on some necessary Occasions, in his Return, he had mistook that Chamber for his own. The Landlord replied, that he believed, he was a Villain; and instantly gave him such a Blow, with his Fist, as almost stunned poor *Andrew*: But recovering himself, and being a strong young Fellow, he struck at the Landlord again, and knocked the Candle and Candlestick out of his Hand: Thereupon, a fierce Engagement ensued between these two in the Dark, the Daughter

ter all the while screaming out Murther, as loud as she could bawl.

This Uproar alarmed almost all the Inn; and the Chamberlain and Ostler coming to their Master's Assistance, released him from *Andrew's* Clutches, who had gotten him down on the Floor, and was belabouring him very heartily when they entered.

The Landlady, on hearing the Noise, and knowing where her Husband was gone to, flipt on her Gown and Petticoat, and came running to see what was the Matter: When hearing that *Andrew*, being found in her Daughter's Room, had been the Occasion of the Quarrel between them, she flew at him, and called him all the vile Names she could think of; but the Chamberlain getting him away from her, conducted him safely to his own Room.

When all the rest were gone, the Husband and Wife began to upbraid their Daughter, in the most opprobrious Terms, for admitting such a Fellow into her Chamber:—‘Hussey,’ said the Landlady, ‘had it been a Gentleman, that could have

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' paid handsomely for a Night's Plea-
 ' sure with you, indeed, then you might
 ' have had some Excuse : But to take a
 ' poor, pitiful, lousy Pickle-herring Dog
 ' of a *Merry-Andrew* to Bed with you, who
 ' can hardly afford a Shilling for a Pint of
 ' Wine! You will never follow your Mo-
 ' ther's Steps, that you never will, you
 ' Jade, you ; I was always Company for
 ' my Better's. If I had taken up with
 ' such Fellows as this, your Father would
 ' never have been able to have kept the
 ' House so long over his Head. I never
 ' denied your keeping Company with
 ' Gentlemen of the Army, as long as they
 ' had Money, nor should not be against
 ' your obliging any one, that can afford to
 ' pay for it ; but to let such a Scrub Dog
 ' as this to come to Bed to you! What
 ' the Devil could you expect to make of
 ' him ?

Here the Daughter bursting out into
 Tears, swore that she was as innocent as
 the Child unborn, and knew nothing of
Andrew's coming into the Room :—' You
 ' know nothing of it, you Slut you,' re-
 plied the Landlady, ' a likely Story truly ;
 ' why how could any Man come into your
 ' Room, without your knowing it.' ' In-
 VOL. I. M deed,

‘ deed, Mother,’ answered the Daughter,
 ‘ I don’t know; but I thought I had locked
 ‘ the Door when I went to Bed; and per-
 ‘ haps, the Lock may be faulty.’ ‘ I believe
 ‘ so too,’ answered the Landlord; ‘ for tho’
 ‘ I thought it locked on my coming to the
 ‘ Door, yet it opened very easily on giving
 ‘ it a gentle Push; but I will have it alter-
 ‘ ed To-morrow.’ ‘ The Lock faulty!
 ‘ marry,’ says her Mother, ‘ I believe your
 ‘ Lock is faulty indeed, or else you would
 ‘ not suffer it to be thus picked by every
 ‘ mean Fellow.’

Notwithstanding the Landlady’s Unbe-
 lief in this Matter, yet we must do her
 Daughter the Justice which becomes every
 impartial Historian to use; by declaring,
 that the aforesaid Lock of her Chamber-
 Door had been played Tricks with so often,
 by false Keys and Picklocks, for the Ad-
 mission of her Lovers at convenient Hours,
 that it really was become very insecure:
 And the Spring being ready to fly back on
 the least Touch, had occasioned her Father’s
 easy Admittance; for *Andrew* had locked
 it as well as he could after him.

And here, perhaps, it will not be amiss
 to acquaint the Reader, what Occasion
 brought

brought the Landlord up to his Daughter's Chamber so late; as probably his Curiosity may have been excited on this Point, wherein he has hitherto been kept in the Dark. But we shall immediately clear it up, by acquainting him, that the Landlady having eaten too freely of some pickled Cucumbers at Supper, they had given her the Gripes so violently, that she had been obliged to raise her Husband to call her Daughter up, that she might get some burnt Brandy, to ease her Pain: But the Uproar that she heard, and the Outcry of Murder, dispelled her Malady much sooner than the strongest Cordial could have done: For she felt no more of her former Ailment till now that she was sat down on the Bed-side, railing at her Daughter, in which she proceeded in this Manner.

‘ Your Father and I, you Slut you,’ says she, ‘ have been at much Pains to a fine Purpose in giving you Education, and rearing you up like a Gentlewoman, in Hopes to bring Company to the House; and you to fling all our Cost and Charges away, by submitting to the Desires of such a mean Fellow as a *Merry-Andrew*!—Why, if you knew how to set a just Value upon yourself, Hussy,

M 2

‘ you

' you are Meat for his Master. If you
 ' had had that Thought you might per-
 ' haps have got four or five Pieces out of
 ' him for a new Gown ; but, as you go on
 ' at this Rate, I don't know that your
 ' Earnings will ever buy you Thread to
 ' mend your old ones.—Do you think,
 ' you Jade, that I flung myself away so
 ' at your Years ?——No, Hussy, your
 ' Father here is Witness that I was then as
 ' nice and as coy as ever a Maid in the
 ' Parish. And though our Misfortunes in
 ' Life have since obliged me to condescend
 ' to humour some Gentlemen's Tempers,
 ' yet you know it is a common Thing in
 ' our Way of Business to be obliging to
 ' every Body, when we are well-paid for
 ' it: And if I had not taken Care to have
 ' been well compensated, your Father must
 ' have been a Bankrupt before now—that
 ' he must you Baggage, you, and he well
 ' knows it!'

Here the Landlord interrupted her, say-
 ' ing, ' indeed Wife, as to either your Earn-
 ' ings or your Daughter's, this Way, I have
 ' no Occasion to boast of them. You
 ' know it was always against my Consent,
 ' that either of you attempted it; and I
 ' believe it has rather been a Loss than an
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‘ Advantage to us, by bringing an ill
 ‘ Name upon our House, whereby I am
 ‘ certain we have lost some very good civil
 ‘ Customers, that used to call here for-
 ‘ merly ; but now they always set up at
 ‘ other Inns in the Town.’

‘ You may thank yourself for that,’ re-
 plied his Wife, ‘ you were always so con-
 ‘ founded jealous, that it gave other Peo-
 ‘ ple a Suspicion of my Conduct, even
 ‘ where there was no Occasion:—And
 ‘ could never be contented, although you
 ‘ knew, if it had not been for my Assis-
 ‘ tance this Way, you would not have been
 ‘ able to have kept the Sign of the *****
 ‘ so long over your Head. But though
 ‘ you found the Benefit, you could not
 ‘ help Grumbling, and shewing your Un-
 ‘ easiness before other People. Go call
 ‘ up *Dolly*, do, you good for nothing Fel-
 ‘ low, and let her mull me some Claret
 ‘ directly, for I am not able to go to Bed
 ‘ for the Gripes, till I have some.’

The Landlord took the Candle, having
 first light his Daughter’s, and went to the
 Maid’s Chamber, where *Will Ramble* was ;
 who had lain very still hitherto, not daring
 to stir till the Noise was all over, for Fear

of being discovered. But, however, he was sensible of his Mistake before this Time; for on hearing of the Uproar, he asked his Bedfellow what she thought could be the Matter: Who replied, 'she could not tell, but it must certainly be in her young Mistress's Room; and as she heard her Master's Voice, that he probably had caught her in Bed with some of her Gallants.'

Will Ramble was very much surprized on hearing this Reply; and was not only confident of being mistaken himself, in his Companion with whom he was in Bed, but had also great Reason to imagine that the Person was as much mistaken in him, as she had several Times called him her dear *Andrew*: But the little Conference that had passed between them, was obliged to be carried on in such a low whispering Voice, as made it impossible for them to distinguish each other, till the Landlord coming to the Door, and calling *Dolly* by her Name, discovered her to *Will Ramble*.

She answered her Master, that she was a coming; and whispered *Will* to hide himself under the Bed, while she got up:
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But being somewhat long about it, in order to give her Bedfellow the more Time to conceal himself, and her Mistress's Pains not admitting of such Delay, the Landlady herself came to *Dolly's* Door in such a Rage, that she was obliged to unlock it, and admit her into the Chamber.

Will, being greatly alarmed at this Interruption, had retired with so much Precipitation, that he forgot to take all his Cloaths with him; and the Landlady, on entering the Room, and upbraiding the Maid for being so long in coming, presently perceived a Pair of Men's Shoes by the Bed-side.— ‘Hey Day!’ says she, ‘what Fellows Shoes have you got here Madam?’ ‘They are an old Pair,’ says *Dolly*, ‘that I borrowed of the Chamberlain to slip on in a Morning; for when I get up, my Feet are very apt to be swelled.’ ‘Are they so,’ says her Mistress, ‘and pray whose Waistcoat is that; sure you don’t dress in a Man’s Apparel too on a Morning, for the Benefit of your Shapes, do you?’— ‘What Fellow have you had here in Bed; come, where is he, for I will have him out before I go?’

Upon this she called loudly for her Husband, who coming in, and being acquainted with his Wife's Suspicions, began to search the Chamber, and presently discovered *Will* under the Bed, from whence he soon dragged him out; and making him take his Cloaths, sent him away to his Chamber; swearing that he would acquaint the Doctor in the Morning with his Impudence, in making his House a Bawdy-House. The Landlady gave *Dolly* Warning, which it seems she had often received from her Mistress before; who was very apt to bestow it on her Servants on any frivolous Occasion, and therefore *Dolly* paid the less Regard to it at present.

After a whole Volly of Whores, Sluts, and Jades, the Landlady retreated to her Chamber, and ordered *Dolly* to bring her the mulled Wine thither; who proceeded to execute her Mistress's Commands, though somewhat surpris'd at the Discovery of her Bed-Fellow: However, she had so little Reason to dislike him, that she could heartily have wished not to have been disturbed so soon. Having mull'd the Wine, and put her Master and Mistress to Bed again, she retired:—Though not to her

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own Chamber, but to that of *William's*, who presently gave her Admittance; where she continued till Morning; as the rectifying their joint Mistake, and some other Matters, that they now proceeded about with more Safety than before, took them up a considerable Time to dispatch.

M 5 CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

In which Will Ramble is discovered by his Guardian.

AS the Landlord understood that *Will Ramble* was a great Favourite with the Doctor, so, upon cooler Thoughts, the next Morning, he altered his Resolution of acquainting his Master with his Proceedings the Night before : To which the Advice of the Landlady very much contributed, who pleaded strongly in *Will's* Behalf, on Account of his Youth; being also incited to this, not a little, in Regard to his Beauty, which she had not failed of remarking from his first coming into the House. Moreover, she alledged, that such wanton Sluts as *Dolly*, were enough to entice any young Fellow : That, therefore, he was not to be blamed, and might lose his Place, perhaps, by the Thing being discovered ; which she said, would only bring more Scandal upon their House, than what it underwent already. Her Husband submitted to her Counsel, and said Nothing of the Matter ; and the Doctor being to mount another Stage that

Day,

Day, at a Town about Seven Miles off, set out on his Journey thither, with his Attendants, as soon as they had all breakfasted : For the Days being short, they were obliged to make the most of their Time, as they proposed to return back again the same Night.

About Five o'Clock in the Afternoon, two Gentlemen on Horse-back, with their Servants, arrived at the Inn, and set up there for that Night. The Doctor returned thither with his Attendants, about Seven : When one of the Gentlemen that were lately come in, being in the Kitchen, giving some Directions concerning his Supper, turned his Head about, and looked very earnestly, and in seeming Amazement, at *Will*, whom he hardly knew in his present Garb ; and at length cried out :
 ' ---What ! Mr. *William Ramble* ! ---Can it
 ' be you, that I see here, in this Dress ?'
 ' Yes, Sir, assuredly it is,' answered *William*. ' I thought,' said the Gentleman,
 ' that I should never have met with you ;
 ' but I am glad, that Fortune has been so
 ' propitious to me in this Journey. Come,
 ' young Gentleman, walk into the Room
 ' with me, and let me hear, what Account
 M 6 ' you

‘ you can give of yourself, and how you
‘ came to quit my House.’

This Gentleman was Mr. *Merit* himself, who was on his Return from *Wales*, where he had been along with an Acquaintance, to view an Estate, which the latter had to dispose of; and which Mr. *Merit* had a mind to purchase.

Will Ramble followed him very obediently into the Room; and there asking Pardon, in a most submissive Manner, for his Elopement, directly acquainted him with the Reasons thereof; saying, it was the Dread of his future Anger, and a most severe Chastisement; and also related to him, what Courses he had been obliged to take, since that Juncture.

After a short, but severe Reprimand, for his Folly, in acting so unbecoming his Birth, Mr. *Merit* readily forgave him this Fault; and told him, that he hoped, the Hardships he had experienced in Consequence of committing it, would deter him from the like for the future. He instantly sent for a Taylor, to provide *Will* with some handsomer Apparel, than what he at present appeared in; and Mr. *Merit*,
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with the other Gentleman, continued two Days at the Inn, till *Will's* Cloaths were finished: When taking him along with them, they set out on their Journey homeward.

But, before this, *Will* having acquainted his Guardian with the civil Usage he had met with from the Mountebank, *Mr. Merit* invited the Doctor to Dinner with them; and returned him Thanks for treating his Ward so kindly. To which the Doctor replied: That notwithstanding the Dress in which *Will* first appeared to him, yet he plainly discovered Something at that Time in his Countenance, and since in his Behaviour and Understanding, which gave him Room to think him of better Birth and Education, than what he would pass for; and therefore, he resolved not to part with him, till such Time as he could discover who he was; which, though *Will* always kept very secret from him, yet, nevertheless, he was fully convinced, that he was some Youth of a good Family, that had made an Elopement from his Friends.

Will, to say Truth, had begun to be tired with Servitude some Time before this Accident; although the present was rendered

dered very easy to him by his Master's Indulgence. He took a handsome Farewell to his two Comrades, the *Merry-Andrew* and *Tumbler*; giving them, by Mr. *Merit's* Direction, a Guinea a-piece, in Acknowledgment for their former civil Deportment towards him: And as *Will* had always behaved himself very well to them, they were under no small Concern at the Loss of him from their little Company.

Three Days after their Departure from the Inn, *Will*, and his Guardian, and the Gentleman that accompanied him, arrived at Home, at Mr. *Merit's*; but how Matters stood there, we shall take a fresh Chapter to relate.

CHAP.

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C H A P. V.

Containing Occurrences at Mr. Merit's.

ON *Will Ramble's* Arrival at Mr. *Merit's*, he was received with great Joy by his Sister *Amelia*, and all the rest of the Family : As for Mr. *Merit's* Son, *Harry*, he had been gone to the University of *Oxford* two Months before.

Will had very much impaired his Morals, and almost lost all his Learning by his Progress : Wherefore Mr. *Merit* put him again under the Care of the same Clergyman, to whom he had formerly committed him, that he might amend the one, and regain the other. And *Will* having seen a little of the World in his late Travels, and being arrived at those Years, when the Want, or Loss of Learning becomes very perceptible, he retook himself to his Studies with great Diligence : At which we shall leave him for a Time, and in the mean while give an Account of some further Transactions that occurred at Mr. *Merit's*, during *Will's* Absence from thence.

We

We left Miss *Watkins* waiting the Return of the Messenger, that, by Mr. *Merit*'s Advice, she had sent to Mr. *Sparks*, to let him know what had happened to her. When the Man came to the House where Miss *Watkins* had left this Gentleman, he found, that he was so well recovered of his Wound, as to be able to set out the Day before for his Mother's ; where he expected to meet with Miss *Watkins* : So that the Servant soon returned back again with her Letter.

Upon this Disappointment, she requested of Mr. *Merit*, to let her have a Horse and a Servant, to conduct her to Mr. *Sparks*'s Mother's. But, after some Deliberation, he told her : That, as the Roads were both bad and dangerous, at that Time of the Year, and she had met with so many unfortunate Accidents already, he thought it better, if she would follow his Advice, and write again to Mr. *Sparks* and that one of his Servants should carry the Letter: ' For very probably,' says Mr. *Merit*, ' on Mr. *Sparks*'s Arrival at his Mother's, and not meeting with you according to his Expectations, he will think, that your Father-in-Law has got you

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' you again into his Power, or that some
' Accident has befallen you, and, therefore,
' will proceed in Search after you.'

Miss *Watkins* followed Mr. *Merit's* Counsel, and dispatched the Servant away with a Letter to Mr. *Sparks*, at his Mother's; giving him Orders withal, that in Case Mr. *Sparks* should not be there, to leave the Letter, and acquaint his Mother whom it came from, and where she was.

It happened just as Mr. *Merit* had conjectured. For Mr. *Sparks* not meeting with Miss *Watkins* at his Mother's, nor hearing any Tidings of her, or the Servant that accompanied her, judged, that some Accident must needs have befallen them; as, otherwise, they must have been there a considerable Time before him. Therefore, after many uneasy Conjectures and Debates in his own Mind, which Way to proceed, he, at last, determined to set out privately for her Father-in-Law's Neighbourhood, and endeavour to find out whether she was returned Home.

He was gone upon this Journey, when Mr. *Merit's* Servant arrived at his Mother's

ther's with Miss *Watkins's* Letter; who having performed his Commission, returned with Advice, that Mr. *Sparks* was gone from thence in quest of her; which gave the young Lady no small Uneasiness.

Mr. *Sparks* was very much surprized and concerned, at his not being able to gain any Intelligence of Miss *Watkins*: But her Brother-in-Law, having heard at *Liverpool*, that Mr. *Sparks* was gone to his Mother's, in *Yorkshire*, both his Father and he determined to pursue Miss *Watkins* thither, in hopes to get there Time enough, to prevent the Match between her and Mr. *Sparks*; and, thereby, retrieve her again into their Clutches.

These two arrived at Mr *Sparks's* Mother's, much about the same Time as he was returned to their Neighbourhood; and they proceeded directly to her House, where they enquired, in a very haughty Manner, after Miss *Watkins*, and threatened Mrs. *Sparks* very hard for concealing her. But, on her assuring them, that she was not there, and that she had never seen her, they were obliged to depart, though they did not believe her.

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However, to be better certified, before they left the Place, they found Means to bribe one of the Servants, who, having over-heard Mr. *Merit's* Footman deliver his Message, discovered to them where Miss *Watkins* was; whereupon, they directly set out to Mr *Merit's* to demand her.

Upon their Arrival there, and being introduced to that Gentleman, they acquainted him who they were, and what was their Business. To which, he very gravely told them, that, as the young Lady had been obliged, by an Accident she met with upon the Road, to take to his House as an Asylum against their Cruelty, so he should not think proper to forfeit his Word to her, in giving her up to them, unless they could find legal Means to oblige him to it; which he believed would be very difficult for them to do, after the notorious Ill-Usage that she had received at their Hands.

This unexpected Declaration of Mr. *Merit's*, put Miss *Watkins's* Father and Brother-in-Law beyond all Patience; to think, that they should have taken so much Pain

Pains, and had had such a long Journey for Nothing: Whereupon, they begun to curse, swear, and storm at Mr. *Merit*; asking him, what Authority he had to detain her from them, who were her Guardians; and threatened him with the utmost Severity of the Law, in case he did not deliver her up.

As Mr. *Merit* already knew to the contrary of their being her Guardians, so he was not intimidated at their Threatenings; nor could all their Oaths, or bullying, oblige him to alter his Resolution. But told them, in Return, that, if they did not think proper to confine their Tongues to better Language, he should, as a Magistrate, and being insulted in his own House, instantly send a Servant for a proper Officer, and deal with them according to the Authority that he was invested with.

Finding there was no prevailing on Mr. *Merit* by rough Means, they requested the Favour of him, that they might be only permitted to speak a Word to Miss *Watkins*, before their Departure; as they said, that they had a Matter of Consequence to communicate to her. But as they had affronted Mr. *Merit* with such gross Language

guage before, so neither would he comply with this; as he knew the Sight of them would not be at all acceptable to the young Lady. So that all they could obtain from him, was : That if they had a mind to go to the next Inn, and communicate what they had to say in Writing, he would take Care that it should be delivered to her, and they should have an immediate Answer.—With this, at last, they found themselves obliged to comply; and the Reader may, if he pleases, be informed of the Contents of their Letter, and the Consequences thereof, in the next Chapter.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

*What happened between Miss Watkins and
her Father-in-Law.*

WHEN these two Gentlemen were gone, Mr. *Merit* sent for Miss *Watkins*, and acquainted her with their having been with him, and the Errand they came upon.—If the Reader has ever seen a Hare in a Field, after having been long pursued by a Pack of loud-mouthed Dogs, squat herself down all trembling, under the Cover of some Hedge; then, perhaps, he may conceive some Idea of the Condition Miss *Watkins* was now in. Her tottering Limbs were hardly able to support her Body: Which Mr. *Merit* perceiving, he very kindly desired her to compose herself, and entertain no fearful Apprehensions; for as he had taken her under his Protection, she should be safe from their Power, while in his House.

He then proceeded to inform her of all that had passed between them; the Relation of which he had scarcely finished, when

a Messenger arriv'd with the following Letter from her Father-in-Law,

' *Daughter,*

I Am astonish'd at your Madness and Folly, in quitting my House (where you have been always us'd with the same Tenderness as though you had been my own Child) to follow that scoundrel Fellow, *Sparks*; which must certainly prove your Destruction, as he only wants to get your Fortune into his Hands to squander away; and is not able to settle you any Jointure, or provide any Maintenance for you afterwards. I hope your Eyes are sufficiently opened by this Time to see into his dark Designs: But if they are not, you will oblige me to use that Authority, which both your late Father and Mother assign'd me over you, to prevent your Ruin. I desire, therefore, that you will instantly comply with my Request, and return Home with me; where you shall meet with the kindest Entertainment: But if you obstinately persist in following your own Inclinations to the contrary, be assur'd that I shall make Use of Force to compel you to it; neither

‘ neither will the Old Hunks, you are at
 ‘ present with, be able then to screen you
 ‘ from,

‘ *Your incensed,*

‘ *tho’ forgiving Father-in-Law,*

‘ C — B —

Miss *Watkins* having read this Letter, shewed it to Mr. *Merit*: When, after a short Consultation thereon, she returned the following Answer by the Bearer.

‘ *S I R,*

‘ **I** Am as much surpris’d at the Expression in your Letter, of my being tenderly us’d at your House, as you can be
 ‘ astonished at my escaping from thence
 ‘ after the cruel Usage I there met with.—
 ‘ If such was your Kindness, what must
 ‘ your Severity be, if ever I should chance
 ‘ again to fall under the Lash of it?—
 ‘ But as I am fully determin’d in my Resolution, of never coming into your
 ‘ Power again; so I beg that you will not
 ‘ trouble me with any more Sollicitation
 ‘ upon that Head.—As for your Threats
 ‘ I despise them; as does the Gentleman
 ‘ who

‘ whom you are pleased to stile an Old
 ‘ Hunks ; whose Honour and Generosity
 ‘ have raised him in the Esteem of Man-
 ‘ kind, far above the Power of your Ma-
 ‘ lice to injure ; and it was purely in Re-
 ‘ gard to his Promise to you that I send
 ‘ this Answer, but expect no more from
 ‘ your

Daughter-in-Law,

‘ ELIZ. WATKINS.’

On the Receipt of this Letter, her Fa-
 ther-in-Law left the Inn where he was ;
 and riding about five Miles farther, in the
 Road that he knew Miss *Watkins* must
 take to go to Mr. *Sparks*’s Mother’s, he
 and his Son put up there together at a small
 Village.

Mr. *Sparks* having made all the Enquiry
 he could after Miss *Watkins*, but to no
 Purpose, returned back to his Mother’s,
 where he received the Letter that she had
 sent him ; which put him in the greatest
 Extasies of Joy ; on knowing where she
 was, and of her being in Safety. He set
 out thither early the next Morning, where

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they had a very tender Meeting together, which occasioned many Tears to be shed on both Sides.

After this, he paid his Respects to Mr. *Merit* and the two young Ladies; kindly embracing and thanking them all for the Favours they had bestowed on Miss *Watkins*; and they in Return, congratulated both him and her, on this their propitious Meeting together.

Mr. *Merit* acquainted him with Miss *Watkins's* Father and Brother-in-Law having been there, and all that had passed thereupon; and also advised him to compleat his Nuptials with her as soon as possible, if there was no private Obstruction between them, for fear of meeting any more Impediments. Mr. *Sparks* replied, that he knew of no Obstacle on his Side, that could prevent their being married directly, if Miss *Watkins* was pleased to give her Consent; and she declared that she had no Objection against it. Whereupon, Mr. *Merit* very freely offered them to have their Nuptials performed, and consummated at his House: This they readily accepted of, and he sent to the Clergyman that educated *Will Ramble*, to bring a Licence with him, and come
and

and perform the Ceremony there. But as this Gentleman happened at that Time not to have a Licence by him, nor could not procure one nearer than *Malton*, Mr. *Sparks* determined, for more speedy Dispatch, to go thither for one himself.

He set out accordingly, with a Servant before him for a Guide, and had not rode above a Quarter of a Mile from the House, when he met a poor Man in a ragged Coat by the Road-side, who begged Charity of him; and Mr. *Sparks* being of a very compassionate Temper, put his Hand in his left Coat-Pocket to give him what Halfpence he had, when either the Glove he had on, or the Tip of his Ruffle caught hold on Miss *Watkins's* Letter which was therein, and drawing it up, it dropped out unperceived by him.

Having bestowed his Alms, he rode on; and no sooner was he gone, than the Fellow spied the Letter, and picked it up. Now Miss *Watkins's* Father-in-Law, during his Stay at the aforesaid Village, had hired this very Fellow to watch about Mr. *Merit's*, and give him Intelligence if she or Mr. *Sparks* (whom he imagined to be there or somewhere thereabouts) should take any

other Road : Of both of whom he had given the Man such an exact Description, as it was impossible he could mistake them : Especially as Mr. *Sparks* was pretty much pitted with the Small-Pox, (though not at all disfigured) which, together with his Youth, made him very remarkable. And that he might have Notice the sooner, if any such Thing happened, he had provided the Fellow with a very good Nag, which stood at the Inn where he himself had called, when he wrote to his Daughter-in-Law : But having hid his other Cloaths, he was to appear in that ragged Dress in which Mr. *Sparks* met him, as a Beggar, when he was any where on Duty near Mr. *Mérit's*.

As the Fellow could read a little, so on opening the Letter he made shift to hammer out the Contents ; and seeing Mr. *Sparks's* Name on the Direction, and that of Miss *Watkins* at the Conclusion, he imagined that perhaps, it might be of some Benefit to the Gentleman that had employed him ; so he took his Horse and rode away to him with it, in Expectation of a Gratitude for his Service.

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Miss *Watkins's* Father-in-Law soon understood by the Man's Description of the Person, who had dropped it, that it must be Mr. *Sparks* himself : But as the Fellow could give no Account whither he was gone to, or upon what Business, so he remained at a Loss for what Use to make of the Letter, though he knew very well that it was his Daughter-in-Law's Hand-Writing.

However, after some Pondering, he sealed it up anew ; and bid the Man take his Horse again, and ride away to Mr. *Merit's*, and ask for Miss *Watkins*, charging him not to deliver it into any other Person's Hands : Telling him, withal, to acquaint her, that a Gentleman who had been taken so ill upon the Road, that he was not able to write, had dispatched him to conduct her to a Village about three Miles off, where he lay, and had sent that Letter by him as a Token from whom it came.

The Fellow went and performed his Errand very dexterously, and with the greatest Assurance. In the mean Time Miss *Watkins's* Father-in-Law provided himself with

a Coach and Six from *Malton*, which he stationed at a private Place on the Road ; and then went forward with his Son, and four Rusticks that he had hired, to the Village, whither the Man was to conduct Miss *Watkins*.

When she received this Letter, she went, in a great Fright, and acquainted Mr. *Merit* with the News : Who though he was not of a very suspicious Temper, yet he had known enough of the Wickedness of Mankind to make him very wary. He therefore sent for the Man and examined him himself : But he answered so punctually to all his Interrogations, and gave such an exact Description of Mr. *Sparks*, who he said had employed him, that Mr. *Merit* laid aside all Doubt of the Truth of it : Wherefore, ordering his Chariot to be got ready, he dispatched Miss *Watkins* in it, with two of his Servants on Horseback to attend her.

As her Father-in-Law knew which way she was to come, so he and his Company waited in Ambush at the End of a narrow Lane that was in the Road. When the Chariot came up, his Son stopped the Horses, the four Rusticks leaped over the Hedge,

Hedge, and engaged the two Footmen, while he himself and the other Fellow took Miss *Watkins* out of the Chariot; and mounting her behind her Brother-in-Law, he rode away with her as hard as the Horse would go, till they came to the Coach and Six, into which she was instantly put; and her Father-in-Law getting in with her, his Servant led his Horse, and his Son rode by the Coach-side to guard them.

Though Mr. *Merit*'s two Servants had Pistols, and behaved very well on this Occasion, yet the Surprize they were in, on being so suddenly surrounded and attacked, one of their Pistols missing Fire, and being both almost instantly knocked off their Horses by the long Staves that the Fellows had in their Hands, whereby one of them received a large Wound in his Head, and the other was very much bruised; all this, I say, contributed to the other Party's gaining the Victory. For the Fellows whom Miss *Watkins*'s Father-in-Law had employed being told that they were hired to recover an Heiress, that had been stolen away, and also very well-paid for their Trouble, it made them the more resolute on this Occasion.

Miss *Watkins* was conducted by her Father and Brother-in-Law to her old Habitation again; and there once more locked up in closer Confinement than any Nun in a Monastery. However, her Courage was so great, as to enable her to bear this Misfortune with the utmost Tranquility of Mind. Neither did she shew any outward Signs of Dejection, by shedding Tears, or otherwise, during the Time that her Pursuers were conducting her Back to *Prescot*. But, on the contrary, behaved all the Way to her Oppressors, with such an Inflexibility of Spirit, as shewed they would not easily compass their Ends, by the foul Measures they had taken, to force her to act contrary to her Inclinations.

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C H A P. VII.

Containing, among other Things, the Description of Miss Louisa Merit.

ON the Return of the two Servants to Mr. *Merit's*, in a fore and bloody Condition, all the Family were terribly amazed at the Loss of Miss *Watkins*.

Mr. *Merit* instantly sent for a Constable, and arming all his Domesticks, proceeded with a Hue and Cry, at the Head of such of his Tenants and Neighbours, as could be got together, in Quest of the Ravishers, quite to the Bounds of the County ; but they drove fast enough to get out of Reach long before he arrived there.

Soon after the Return Home of the two Servants Mr. *Sparks* arrived ; who had called by the Way upon the Clergyman, that was *Will Ramble's* Tutor, and brought him along with him. But how great was his Astonishment on *Louisa's* relating to him the News of the Loss of Miss *Watkins* : He tore his Hair, beat his Bosom, wrung his Hands, stamped, raved, swore, and ex-

pressed all the Symptoms of highest Madness; neither could the pious Exhortations of the Clergyman moderate his Rage.

By Degrees he came to himself a little; but on the Return of Mr. *Merit* and his Retinue without Miss *Watkins*, he fell again into his former Extravagancies; whereupon the good Gentleman, really thinking that he was gone mad, instantly dispatched a Messenger for a Physician to attend him. But before the Doctor's Arrival they got him to Bed; and though this Accident did not drive him quite out of his Senses, yet it flung him into such a violent Fit of Sickness as he was some Time before he recovered from; during which, Mr. *Merit*, very generously, had the greatest Care taken of him.

After remaining at Mr. *Merit*'s some Time, to get his Health again, and not hearing any Thing more of Miss *Watkins*, he set out for his Mother's, where we must leave him at present to see how *Will Ramble* proceeded.

Will stuck very closely to his Book, and partook of very little Diversion, except
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now and then amusing himself in a Walk, or at Cards with his Sister and *Louisa*. On the latter he would often cast his Eyes very attentively, and as suddenly look down on the Ground again; a heavy Sigh would frequently steal from his Bosom, without his knowing the Occasion; and he always longed for her Company though he was sensible that he never looked so foolishly as when he was in it.

Will knew not what to make of these Symptoms at first; but they growing stronger upon him, he at Length found that he was really in Love with her, even in the purest Signification of the Word.

Miss *Louisa Merit* was now about the Age of Seventeen: Her Stature did not extend quite to what is termed a middle Size, nevertheless, her Form was delicate, and her Limbs, though small, were fashioned with the exactest Symmetry. Her Hair was of a very dark-brown, and being naturally of no great Length, just covered her Neck with a Set of such fine polished Ringlets, as would exceed the Art of the nicest Barber to imitate, in the finest *Tete-à-mouton* that he could make, to fashion

out the highest Duchefs in the Land. Her Viſage was regular, and exceeding ſweet-featured. Her Eyes were well-made, black and ſparkling, and her Noſe, Mouth and Chin were admirably well formed. Her Complexion was fairer than could be expected from the deep Colour of her Hair; the fine Vermillion that beſpread her Cheeks, added vaſtly to the Luſtre of her Face; and the united Graces of her whole Perſon might, without any Partiality, or Injuſtice, be termed exquisitely charming.

The Excellencies of her Mind were not inferior to the Beauties of her Perſon : She was poſſeſt of all the Good-nature, Humanity, and Benevolence of her Father, without being tainted with any of his humoriſt Foibles ; which in him was more the Effect of Years than of Nature, as he had acquired them by neglecting the Suppreſſion of an ill Habit. If any Objection could be made to *Louiſa's* Temper, it was, that her Good-nature ſometimes extended ſo far, as might be term'd a Weakneſs; but as this was only a Conſtruction, that ſome of the Ladies in her Neighbourhood put upon this Ornament of the Mind, of which they had little or no Share to ſtand in Competition with her, ſo we ſhall leave the

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the Justness thereof to the Decision of our Readers, when we have farther introduced her into their Acquaintance.

Though *Will Ramble*, as we said before, was of such an amorous Complexion, that there were very few Female Objects incapable of raising Desires in him, and that he had conceived the tenderest Thoughts for *Louisa*; yet as she was her Father's Darling, who was able to bestow on her a much larger Fortune than *Will's* small Estate would afford to in jointure, so he could not flatter himself with Hopes of obtaining her by Marriage, unless it were without her Father's Consent. And as this must have been vastly to her Prejudice, if he could have succeeded in it, so his real Affection for her would not suffer him to entertain any Thoughts of what would be to her Detriment. For though *Will* had a very ardent Affection for her Person, yet as he was not tainted with Avarice, so he looked on her large Fortune rather as an Obstacle, than an Availment to his Happiness. However vicious and abandoned he might be in Principles, with Regard to the Generality of her Sex, yet his Love for that innate Modesty and Virtue, which he beheld in *Louisa*, restrained him from any indecent

or base Attempt on her to gratify his Passion. He therefore smothered the Flame that he felt in his own Bosom, and endeavoured to divert his Thoughts from *Louisa* by an earnest Application to his Studies, in which he began to make great Improvement.

The having such a handsome genteel young Fellow, as *Will Ramble*, almost continually in Sight, was enough to inspire a Passion in a more obdurate Breast than *Louisa's*. And the great Intimacy that subsisted between her and his Sister, gave Admittance for such a Familiarity between *Louisa* and *Will Ramble*, as must needs have created a strong mutual Affection, even had there been nothing so agreeable in either of their Persons, as to have blown it up into the Flame of Love. In a Word, *Louisa* had not lived so long in the same House with *Will Ramble*, as not to be sensible of some Impressions that his Person had made in her Heart: And though her natural Modesty obliged her to suppress those Sensations as much as possible, yet as she was neither a Prude nor a Coquet, so she was at a Loss for their Arts to conceal them. But whatever tender Sentiments the Person of *Will* had inspired in her Bosom, still as she had Understanding sufficient

ficient to penetrate into the inconstant Levity of his Manners, so she dared not to give the least Encouragement to her Inclinations ; lest, by being fixed on so light-minded an Object, they should prove her Ruin. Therefore, although she knew not at first what to make of these tumultuous Perceptions that she felt, and having been hitherto ignorant of the Efficacy of Love, did not attribute them to that Motive : Yet she struggled so vehemently with her Passion on Account of the Levity of its Object, as very much suppressed, though she could not quite extinguish it.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

Wherein Will Ramble sets out for the University of Oxford.

THOUGH *Louisa* had made more Impression on the Heart of *Will Ramble*, than what he had ever before felt, for any Woman; still it was not as yet so deep, as to be either indelible or invariable. And as Beauty was the Object of his Desire, which he had no Hopes of ever gratifying with the Person of *Louisa*, so the Presence of that Ornament in another Person, might excite the same Passion and Desires, as he had for her: Though as the Gratification of them might be easier procured than with her, it also might occasion their not being so permanent.

If the Reader pleases to reflect a little upon what we have here said, he will find it to be a very just Apology for that Inconstancy, which Men in Love are often observed to be guilty of; particularly, when the Person they adore is even out of the Reach of their most distant Hopes. And though they cannot entirely assuage their
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Passion, or compleatly gratify their Desires, by diverting them to another Object; yet such Diversion may serve, and is found, in some Measure, to appease the violent Emotions which they before felt: Especially if the new Object, on which they endeavour to fix their Inclinations, has any Degree of Resemblance to the Person for whom they before had conceived a strong Affection.--Such an Object Fortune flung in the Way of *Will Ramble*; and with which he either strove to divert his Passion for *Louisa*, or to satisfy his natural amorous Inclinations.

Mr. *Merit* had lately lost a very honest Tenant, who had rented a small Farm of him for many Years; but having a large Family, and meeting with Misfortunes, the poor Man died in very indifferent Circumstances, leaving a Wife and several Children behind him.

As Mr. *Merit's* Compassion was always excited upon the least Motive, so his Charity for this unhappy Family induced him to put the eldest Boy out 'Prentice, and to take the eldest Girl, that was turn'd of eighteen, into his Family as a Servant. She was named *Rose*, and was of a very fresh

fresh blooming Complexion, black-haired, well-featured, and of a tall lusty Stature, for her Age.

She being of a very civil modest Deportment, the two young Ladies took a great Liking to her, and she was almost constantly employed in attending upon them : And having been all her Life-time brought up in a Cottage, that was remote from any Town, so as she knew but very little of Mankind, she had the less Apprehensions of them. Though she had been used to romp and play with her Brothers, and the Man that her Father employed, yet she had not any Idea of Love ; nor ever felt any inward Sensations that occasioned her Uneasiness, excepting the Appetites of Hunger and Thirst ; which being allayed, she was presently at ease.

Will Ramble had by this Time made such a Progress in Learning, that his Tutor pronounced him fit for the University ; and Mr. *Merit* intended to send him thither in a short Time. But though *Will* liked very well the being instructed by a Tutor at Home, yet he had no great Relish for a College-Life, especially as he was to be sent to that, where *Harry Merit* was

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was instituted; whom he looked upon to be (as he really was) a very great Enemy to him: And who, by his Superiority in Learning, *Will* feared, would do all that he could to keep him under. He therefore begged a Respite of two or three Months from his going; pleading, that he did not think himself as yet far enough advanced in Learning, to enter the University; and desired the Favour to enjoy a little more of his Sister's Company, as he must then take such a long Farewell of it; and Mr. *Merit*, out of his innate Good-Nature and Affection, was pleased to grant him the fullest Extent of Time that he had requested, to instruct and divert himself before he went.

But, notwithstanding *Will's* Disinclination for the University, he would hardly have requested this Favour of his Guardian, had he not been induced to it by another Motive, that was too powerful for him to withstand; which was his Love, or rather his Desire for the Person of *Rose Freelove*; for whom he had entertained a very violent Inclination. And, as his Intimacy with the two young Ladies, on whom she attended, afforded him sufficient Opportunities, he had already made his Ad-

Addresses to her ; but the Girl's natural Modesty, or Ignorance of what he meant, caused him to meet with as strong a Repulse, though not so vehemently expressed, as he could have received from the greatest Lady of Fashion, or the most rigid Virtue.

Will, finding there was no obtaining his Point by the Way of insinuating himself into her Affections, as *Rose* was perfectly insensible to all tender Emotions, be- thought himself of doing it by Stratagem ; but it was some Time before he could meet with an Opportunity to put it in Execution : However, at last, an Occasion presenting itself, he set about it in the following Manner.

One *Sunday*, when all the Family were gone to Church, and Nobody but *Rose* and the Cook left at Home ; the former having obtained that Permission, on Account of expecting her Brother to come to see her ; *Will* feigned some Ailment, that he might be excused from attending the rest.

Accordingly he went and laid himself down on his Bed ; and, when they were all gone, he desired *Rose* to make a Pot of Coffee,

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Coffee, and bring it up to him, complaining, he had a Pain in his Head.

She obeyed his Orders; and on carrying it to him, he desired her, to sit down on the Bed-Side, and pour it out for him; pretending that he was unable to sit up and help himself to it. The Girl very innocently did as he bid her; and he had not drank above a Dish, when catching her hold round the Neck, he pulled her down to him, and the Room they were in being a great Distance from the Kitchen, though the Girl struggled, and squawled as loud as she was able, yet, as she could not be heard, *Will* proved too strong for her, and obtained the Gratification of his Desires. But this Usage put *Rose* into such a Storm of roaring and crying, that he was afraid she would directly discover what his Wickedness had perpetrated. And, as he was not without Remorse, afterwards, for what he had done, he fell on his Knees begged and prayed her to forgive him, and to keep the Matter a Secret; swore and vowed the greatest Love and Constancy to her, and used all the endearing Expressions and Methods that were in his Power to invent; yet still *Rose* remained un-

unconsoable in the greatest Agony and Rage.

However, at last, pulling out his Purse, he presented her with two Guineas, desiring her to accept of it as a small Token of his Love, and promised to make it double to her, as soon as it was in his Power, which he said, would be very speedily.

As she had never been Mistress of such a Sum before, so the Sight of the Gold mollified her more than all his Persuasions; and she told him, though she was certain he had ruined her, yet, out of Regard to her Tenderness for him, that he might not incur the Displeasure of his Guardian, she would not divulge what had happened; upon condition, that he promised, never to attempt the like with her again. This *Will* did very readily, and she, having wiped the Tears off her Face, and set her Cap and Apparel a little to rights by the Glass, that was in his Room, went down Stairs as usual, about her Business, though not without such visible Signs of Disorder and Confusion in her Face, as must have been very perceptible to any Body, that had seen her at that Time. However, she did not go directly into the Kitchen again, but

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retired with the Coffee-Pot into her own Room. But when the young Ladies came Home, they could not help perceiving, that she had been crying, and asked her what had been the Occasion of it: To which she answered: It was because her Brother was so unkind as not to come and see her, though he had promised punctually to come, and now it was too late to expect him. As the Ladies made no doubt of the Truth of this, they very kindly did all they could to keep her in Heart, yet she remained very pensive and melancholy during the whole Day, and several more afterwards.

Notwithstanding *Will's* Promise to *Rose*, yet he found Means to repeat his Pleasures with her: For she had already experienced the Power of Gold, and it was the Hopes of acquiring more of it, that made her condescend to his Desires the second Time; which Permission he obtained with a great deal less Reluctancy from her, than he met with in his first Attempt: As she now conceived more Affection for him than ever she had felt before, and began to have some Relish for the Pleasures of Love, of which *Will* had given her the first Idea; and which, in a short Time, getting

getting the better of her Avarice, she grew excessively fond of him, and indulged his amorous Inclinations as often as they could find Opportunities to be together.

Though *Will* had some very libidinous Principles in him, that were both inforced by Nature, and cherished by his former Education, and the Manner of Life he fell into, on his Elopement from his Guardian, yet he could not perceive the growing Affection of *Rose* toward him, without rendering it some Return; and as he knew he had debauched her, so he endeavoured to compensate for it, by his Endearments to her: Being exceeding good-natured and affectionate, even where the Inducement was much smaller than on the present Occasion. For though he had satisfied his Desires, it had not extinguished his Affection for her: And such a potent Effect has Good-Nature, that, notwithstanding the Injury he had done her, *Rose* loved him with very great Fervency.

As the Time of his setting out for the College grew very near, so it occasioned no small Sorrow to them both; and it was very much heightened by *Rose's* proving with Child by him; which made him se-

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veral Times incline to avoid going to the University, and propose to make a second Elopement from his Guardian along with *Rose*. But then, upon farther Consideration, he knew not what Business to take to, nor what Course of Life to pursue, that might enable him to maintain them both: Therefore, as he thought he should be better able to provide some Subsistence for her, and her Child, out of what Mr. *Merit* should allow him for private Expences at the College, he, at last, determined upon going thither.

The Time that his Guardian had allowed him for tarrying at Home being expired, he took a very tender Farewell of *Rose*, giving her three Guineas, and promising to send her more as soon as he was able: Then taking Leave of his Sister and *Louisa*, who both parted from him with Tears, he set out for *Oxford*, along with Mr. *Merit*, who accompanied him to the College.

C H A P. IX.

Wherein an extraordinary Adventure at Mr, Merit's comes to light.

AT the Close of our last Chapter we conducted *Will Ramble*, in Company with his Guardian, to the University of *Oxford*, where they were very joyfully received by *Harry Merit*, which was more than *Will* expected. As the Journey thither was very long, Mr. *Merit* staid there about a Week, with the two young Gentlemen, to refresh himself: When having seen all that was worthy of Notice in the several Colleges, and placed *Will Ramble* under the same Tutors as had the Care of his Son *Harry*, he set out again on his Return Home; from whence he had now been absent almost three Weeks.

After *Will Ramble* had been matriculated, he applied himself to his Studies with much Diligence. And though he was not such a great Proficient in the learned Languages as *Harry Merit*, yet his superior Genius compensated for that Deficiency; so that in a short Time *Harry* began to
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view the Progress that *Will* made in the Sciences with a very jealous Eye; and it revived in him that Spirit of Moroseness and Ill-Nature, which we have before seen him to be possessed of, and which had now lain dormant for some Time, through want of an Object to excite it.

Though *Will* set about his Learning with a vigorous Application, yet it was frequently interrupted by the Thoughts of the miserable Condition in which he had left *Rose*, and the Ideas that would often arise in his Mind of his beloved *Louisa*, whose Absence from his Sight hung very heavy on his Spirits, as he really was very much in love with her: And, notwithstanding that small Inconstancy, which his warm and amorous Constitution had made him guilty of, he was sensible there was a great Disparity between the Charms he had possessed himself of in *Rose* and those he perceived in Miss *Louisa Merit*. However, his Love for the latter, did not suffer him to leave *Rose Freelove* in those unhappy Circumstances, in which he had involved her, without allowing her sufficient Assistance: For he constantly sent her such Supplies of Money, from Time to Time, as he could possibly spare out of the Remittances that

he received from Mr. *Merit*, his Guardian, for his Support at the University.

It was not without some Difficulty, that *Rose* had hitherto concealed the Symptoms that attend breeding Women, from being discerned in her by the rest of the Family; but as she now found her Stays and Petticoats wanted extending, so she knew it would be impossible for her to keep the Affair a Secret much longer. And though through *Will's* Kindness to her, she did not want for Money; yet the being so young and unexperienced in the World, and having no Father for her Child, that she dared to own, reduced her to the most violent Oppressions that can arise from Shame and Grief united together.

Mr. *Merit*, being Justice of *Quorum*, constantly kept a Clerk in his House; to whom he allowed a handsome Salary, besides his Perquisites, which, on some Occasions, were very considerable: For this Gentleman thought it beneath him to follow the Precedent of some of his Brethren, in the Commission of the Peace, who pocket all their Clerk's Fees, on the Consideration of allowing him a small Salary. Neither did he

he suffer him to take Fees of every Person alike ; for Mr. *Merit* would constantly distribute Justice to the Poor, without his Clerk's receiving a Gratuity for filling up a Summons or a Warrant, or making out a Recognizance. However, he always took Care that his Benevolence to one Person, should not prejudice another ; and therefore constantly on such Occasions, he supplied out of his own Pocket, what he thought the Persons, that made Application to him for Justice, were either deficient in, or could ill spare, from themselves or their Families.

The Clerk that then lived with Mr. *Merit*, was named *Johnson* : He was a very active, brisk, dapper Fellow, very well versed in his Business, as a Justice's Clerk, and had, moreover, some little Knowledge both of the Practice and Theory of the Law, having formerly been Clerk to an Attorney. This last Qualification would have very much enhanced his Services, with some of those Gentlemen that are frequently put in the Commission of the Peace, without knowing hardly a Syllable of either Statute or Common Law : For the Want of which, they often become liable, by their Proceedings, to have Informations

entered against them in the Courts above: But as Mr. *Merit* had long studied the Law at the Inner *Temple*, so he needed not the small Abilities therein of his Clerk, to assist his Determination in any judicial Matters.

Though Mr. *Johnson*, by his Profession, and the Manners of the Family he lived in, was confined to Sobriety, yet that was no Part of his natural Character: For he had formerly been so very much addicted to Women and Drinking, when he was Clerk to the Attorney, that his Master was obliged to give him up his Indentures, and turn him out of his House, when he had served not above half his Clerkship: But as he wrote a good Hand, and was an active young Fellow, a Gentleman who had been an intimate Acquaintance with his late Father, ventured, upon his sincere Promise of Reformation, to recommend him to Mr. *Merit*, with whom he had now lived a Year and a Half; during which, as he behaved very unexceptionably, so he has not hitherto given us any Occasion to mention him in this History.

A young Man who was naturally so vicious as Mr. *Johnson*, could hardly see such a blooming

blooming fresh-coloured Lass as *Rose*, in the same House with him, without entertaining some inordinate Affections for her. He had made several Attempts on her Chastity, but had been always repulsed; which, though it could not be attributed to her Virtue, that having fallen a Victim to *Will Ramble's* Desires, yet, perhaps, it was her growing Inclination, and sincere Attachment to the latter, that kept her out of the other's Possession.

Though Mr. *Johnson* had conceived some Notions of *Will* being his Rival in *Rose's* Affections, which were owing perhaps to the superior Comeliness of his Person; yet as he had not any Suspicion of the extraordinary Intimacy that was between them, so he directly renewed his Attempts upon *Rose* with more Vigour, as soon as *Will Ramble* was gone to the College. And she being now almost at her Wit's End, for Want of a Father to her Child, as she was not certain of ever beholding *Will Ramble* again, who was now at so great a Distance from her, soon began to give Ear to Mr. *Johnson's* Allurements: Hoping, that the least she could obtain, by consenting to his Desires, would be having some Body to lay her Child to when it was

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born. But what might the more incline her to listen to Mr. *Johnson*, was, that some how or other, *Rose* had lately got an Intimation of *Will's* Affection for *Louisa*: And, indeed, Nothing can be more penetrating than Women's Eyes on such Occasions, especially when they are interested therein.

It is very likely, that many of our Readers will very much condemn this Proceeding of *Rose* with Mr. *Johnson*, as being exceeding immoral; and, indeed, we shall in no wise attempt her Justification: Though, perhaps, it may be thought by others, that it was a very adequate Retaliation on him, for endeavouring to deprive her of her Virginity, which was the greatest Ornament she had to adorn her; and which Mr. *Johnson* really thought to sacrifice to his Lust. Whatever may be the Sentiments of our Readers on this Matter, yet it was certainly *Rose's* Opinion, that as she had been deflowered by the Baseness of one Man, she had a right to retort his Perfidy on any of the Sex, in order to obtain some Compensation. But leaving this Principle of hers to be discussed by such Casuists as shall undertake it, with a proper Allowance for the Ignorance

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rance in which she had been brought up, with regard to the established Notions of Religion, and Virtue, we shall proceed in our Narration.

Rose relinquishing her former Coyness to Mr. *Johnson*, he soon made himself Master of the small Remnants of her Chastity; and, as she was not very far gone with Child, by her good Management, together with his over Eagerness for Enjoyment, entirely blinded the Affair, so that he had not the least Suspicion about it: And imputed the Easiness of her Condescension to the Absence of *Will Ramble*, whom, as we have said before, he suspected to be more in her good Graces than himself.

Mr. *Johnson* having obtained his Desires of *Rose*, and her big Belly soon growing too large to be concealed; in little more than a Month's Time, she acquainted him, that she was certain of her being with Child by him. He made Answer, that, if the Case was so, he would take care to provide for it: But this Intimation occasioning him afterwards to eye her a little narrowly, he thought her Bulk was rather too considerable, for the short Time

he had been intimate with her. However, he had not much Time either for any Considerations, or to interrogate her further upon this Point; for the Matter becoming evidently conspicuous to the Eyes of the Family, it soon reached Mr. *Merit's* Ears, who was very much alarmed, and concerned at such a Thing happening in his House. He, therefore, ordered *Rose* before him; who, after a short Examination, averred, that his Clerk was the Father: Though she was not compelled to take her Oath of it, as Mr. *Merit* did not examine her in a judicial Way; but only as having the same Authority over her, as the Master of a Family has over his Servants.

He then sent for Mr. *Johnson*, and acquainted him with what *Rose* had laid to his Charge. He could not help owning, that he had had some very intimate Connexion with her; but as it had been only such a short Time since the Commencement of their Familiarity, he demurred very much upon his being the Father of the Child. Nevertheless, as the Girl had always bore a modest Character in the Family, before this Accident, Mr. *Merit* looked upon what his Clerk offered in his Defence, as very slight; and after giving him a severe Re-

Reprimand, discharged him his Service
Telling him withal, that if he did not take
care of *Rose*, and the Child, he would ex-
ert his Authority as a Magistrate, and
compel him to do it.

He afterwards sent *Rose* home to her
Mother; and promised her a small weekly
Allowance, to support her, till such Time
as Mr. *Johnson* should get into some Way
of Business, that might enable him to pro-
vide for her. And, as the two young La-
dies very much commiserated her Misfor-
tunes, they agreed together, though un-
known to Mr. *Merit*, to make an Addi-
tion to his Bounty, for *Rose's* Support; by
which, and the Subsistence that she conti-
nued to receive from *Will Ramble*, who
knew nothing of this Affair, she not only
lived very well herself, but also contributed
to the maintaining of her Mother and three
young Children, that were at Home with
her. This good Woman, being of a very
mild Temper, did not make her Daugh-
ter's Life so uneasy to her, as some others
would have done, by opprobrious Lan-
guage, on the like Occasion: For having
been, as it were, inured to Misfortunes,
she looked upon this, not very uncommon
one, with the less Concern; and only

wished, she had been wise enough, not to have trusted such a young Girl so soon out of her Sight, in the World; and that she had not placed her, at first setting out, in such a large Family as Mr. Merit's.

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C H A P. X.

The Arrival of a fine Gentleman at Mr. Merit's ; and the Picture of a beautiful young Lady drawn from the Life.

IT was not long before Mr. *Johnson* got again into Business ; a Brewer taking him to be his Clerk. As he continued to make a constant Allowance towards the Support of *Rose*, and as the Child had been got in Mr. *Merit's* Family ; so that Gentleman, by his Influence in the Parish, and with his Brother Justices, took care to prevent *Rose's* passing under any Examination of the Officers. For, as she had not sworn her Child, so they could not legally give her any Molestation about it, till a Month after her Delivery : Though such Persons are very apt on these Occasions, to arrogate more Power to themselves, than what the Law admits of ; as they think the Poverty of those whom they have to deal with, will exempt them from the Penalties they incur by such Proceedings. And, indeed, the not examining *Rose* upon Oath, was a Matter of great Forecast in Mr. *Merit* ; as he there-

thereby contributed very much to the skreening her, both from the Oppression of Contumely and Power.

Rose was delivered of a Girl, in somewhat more than Five Months after her Discharge from Mr. *Merit's*: Which, tho' it confirmed Mr. *Johnson* in his Opinion, that he was not the Father of it; yet it occasioned some Dispute among the Female-Sex, whether any Woman could lay a Child to a Man, that was born at seven Months after their cohabiting together. But as they were divided in their Opinions on this Point, we shall not trouble the Reader with relating them. The Child dying a short Time after its Birth, *Rose* was again at Liberty, to provide for herself in the World; and, soon after, had the good Luck to get a Place in a Town, at such a Distance from her Mother's, that the Knowledge of her recent Misfortune never came within the Reach of it. However, as Mr. *Johnson* kept up his Correspondence with her before she went to her Place, and being grown very jealous of *Will Ramble's* having had a Finger in the Pye, as well as himself, he made use of two very persuasive Arguments, to get the Truth from her; which were Money and Liquor. By the joint

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joint Influence of these, she was compelled to disclose the Secret to him: Which being Master of, he directly broke off all Manner of Correspondence with a Woman that he found had imposed upon him so egregiously; and secretly vowed in his Mind, to take a severe Revenge on *Will Ramble*, if ever he should meet with an Opportunity for that Purpose.

While these Things happened, a Gentleman arrived at Mr. *Merit's*, whom we have, as yet, but once mentioned in this History: And this was Mr. *Merit's* eldest Son, who was come from his Quarters, to spend a Month or two at his Father's House. He was a tall, comely, black-haired, well-featured young Man; and having been in the Army, he had acquired a very polite, genteel, and engaging Behaviour; which, together with his natural good Humour, made his Company very agreeable.

Though he entered the Army as a Cornet of Dragoons, he had the good Fortune to be soon preferred to a Lieutenancy, in which Post he was at present: But as the Title of Captain was generally bestowed on him by Courtesy, and it was not a great while

while before he arrived at that Dignity ; so we, to prevent any Mistakes in our Reader, and to avoid Perplexity in our History, shall herereafter give him that Denomination, whenever we shall have Occasion to make mention of him ; being really very deserving of the Title, long before he received his Commission as such.

He had not been long at his Father's, when he began to think *Amelia*, *Will Ramble's* Sister, to be one of the most agreeable young Ladies he had ever yet met with ; and, by a certain Sympathy, which is in some Minds, she entertained a very favourable Opinion of the Captain. As we have not yet exhibited any Description of this young Lady to the Reader, we shall here draw her Portrait, in as minute a Compass as possible ; well knowing, that, though we should attempt to do it in full Length, our Pen would not be able to come up to the Beauties of this fair Model of Nature.

Amelia then, was tall in Stature ; but of such a delicate Shape, and genteel Mien withal, as rendered her Tallness very becoming. Her Forehead was high and graceful, Her Eyebrows were full and arched ;

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arched ; but, having fair Hair, they did not display their Beauty so much as if they had been black. Her Eyes were blue, and had a very expressive Sweetness in them ; which the Painters always found impossible to imitate upon the Canvas, whenever they attempted to draw her Picture. Her Nose, Mouth, and Lips were very handsome. She had a Row of the finest even white Teeth as could be in the World ; and her Chin was very well proportioned to the Rest of her Face. Her Cheeks were oval ; and on the right, between that and the Corner of her Eye ; she had a beautiful Mole, placed by Nature in such an elegant Position, as was impossible for the most artful Patch-Layer to imitate. And as her Complexion was exceeding fair, that Mole was a very great Ornament to her Face ; which, though fair, was defended from Paleness, by a very vivid Blush in her Cheeks ; whose Hue might be compared to the new-blown Rose, till dying away, it lost itself insensibly in the supereminent Whiteness of the Lilly, that appeared in her Skin. Her Neck was long, but not of too great a Length for her Stature ; it was exceedingly well turned, and so exquisitely white, that, without any Hyperbole, it really matched the driven Snow. Her Chest
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and Bosom were finely raised; and her Breasts appeared like two small delicate polished Hemispheres of *Parian* Marble beautifully streaked with blue Veins. And on her Bosom was placed another Mole which nothing could vie with for Beauty or Ornament, than that which, as we have before said, was so exquisitely fixed by Nature a little above her right Cheek. Her Limbs were admirably well framed, and her whole Person was extremely delicate. Insomuch, that *Louisa* and she, might very well be termed an exact Contrast of Nature, forming two exquisite Beauties of different Complexions: *Louisa's* Form being Delicacy in Miniature; and *Amelia's* Delicacy at full Length.

As to her Temper, she was perfectly good-natured, affable, and condescending; and had all her Brother *William's* Spirit and Briskness, without being tainted with any of his Levity: For she was of a very modest Deportment, and endued with a great deal of Virtue. These Accomplishments of her Mind were exceedingly improved and cultivated, by the Education she had received since her being under Mr. *Merit's* Care. As Nature had given her a good Voice, he had caused her to be

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taught Music; and she sung and played on the Harpsichord exceeding well, danced very finely, and spoke both the *French* and *Italian* Tongues with great Fluency and Correctness: For her Guardian, finding that she had a good Genius and Taste for Learning, spared for no Expence in her Education; and, therefore, he engaged the best Masters that Money could procure, or that Part of the Kingdom produce, to instruct her and his Daughter.

And, kind Reader, after having presented thee with the Portrait of this Model of Perfection, which we can assure thee, is taken from the Life, thou wilt very probably be in some Astonishment, at her not meeting with any Admirers, until the Captain came to Mr. *Merit's*; or if she had any, at their not finding a Place before, in this our History.—But to make you easy on this Occasion, we shall acquaint you, that *Amelia* had not only met with one Lover already, but also with two professed ones, besides those that may have sigh'd for her in private; who having never ventured to discover their Flame, so it cannot be supposed, that we should have any Notice of it.

As

As other Circumstances and Incidents in this Narrative, have prevented us yet from declaring, who these two Vories of *Amelia's* were; we shall beg leave to retain the Secret, till thou comest to the next Chapter, wherein we propose to disclose it fully.

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C H A P. XI.

which reveals a Love-Secret, promised in the last Chapter, to be discovered to the Reader.

HERE is scarcely any Thing more apt to excite our Attention, than the losing of a Secret, or the Explanation of what is hidden or mysterious. It is to the former of these, that Encouragement has been given to the Production of so many Volumes which treat of the Philosopher's Stone, the universal *Panacea* †, the finding of the Longitude, and the perpetual Motion; and to the latter, the Priests of all Nations are very much indebted, for the great Wealth and Honours they accumulate; which manifestly shews, that a State of Ignorance, is what is universally desired: Every Man aiming at being as wise, wiser than another, in his Understanding; though not as good, or better in the Practice of Religion or Virtue.

As, at the End of the last Chapter, we promised the divulging of a Matter, which
we

An universal Medicine for all Diseases; that has long studied for, but never yet found out.

we have hitherto contained within our own Bosom ; and it being, moreover, a Love-Secret, we do not doubt but the Reader, whether Male or Female, but especially the latter, may be so eager to arrive at the Knowledge of it, as not even to take a Breathing-Time between these two Chapters, or to sip the Dish of Tea, Coffee, or Chocolate, which perhaps stands cooling on the Table : Expecting that this Secret burns as hot in our Breast, till we have disclosed it, as a School-Boy's Money does in his Pocket, till he has laid it out. But, in such Cases, we Authors are a little more deliberate, than the Generality of our Readers may imagine ; and that for two very good Reasons : Which are, First, to shew, that, like the Free-Masons, we have the Faculty of retaining, as well as divulging a Secret ; both which very much contribute, when managed with Discretion, to the Advantage of our Works. And, Secondly, we are obliged to be pretty cautious in these Matters, of disclosing Secrets, as they very often are attended with such an irksome Repentance, as we would for our own Ease, constantly avoid on all Occasions.

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No longer, then, to trespass upon the Reader's Patience, which we doubt not, but we have tried in the two foregoing Paragraphs, we shall declare: That though *Harry Merit* was, as we have said before, of a very morose Disposition, yet he was not such a Brute as to be insensible of the Charms of *Amelia*; which, nothing but a Brute, or a Creature of a lower Rank in Nature, could be.

He had also made love to *Amelia* privately; but, in such a Manner, as was no ways agreeable to her: For as he was very sordid, and she had but a small Fortune, he addressed her more in the Way of a Gallant, than as ever intending to make her a Husband. But if he could have so far overcome his Avaritiousness, as to court her for a Wife; no doubt, even then, she would have treated his Addresses with the same Contempt as otherwise: And his persisting in them, during the Time that he was at Home with her, only served to render him more hateful to her, than he could have been, from only the bare knowledge of his Ill-Nature alone

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Now, although Mr. *Harry Merit* did not think she had Charms sufficient to compensate her Want of a large Fortune ; yet a young Gentleman, who was just come of Age, and into the Possession of a good Estate, but nine Miles off Mr. *Merit's* House, had entertained a much better Opinion of her : For having seen her at a Ball with *Louisa*, to which he had been invited, her Dancing smit him more than all the rest of her Perfections or Accomplishments ; as he was either a better Judge of that, than of the others, or it was more to his Taste.

This Gentleman was one of those almost irrational Creatures, called *Country-Squires*; and though his Person was not much to be found fault with, yet the Brutality of his Manners and Conversation, both of which he contracted by long Habit and bad Company, could not fail rendering him disagreeable in the Eyes of such a polite young Lady as *Amelia*. For though he had Sense enough, to be more in love with her, than with his Horses, Dogs, or favourite Sport of Hunting, and would willingly have married her without ever a Penny to her Fortune ; yet she had seen too
much

much of the Manners and Behaviour of this Part of the human Species, in her Father's Life-time, ever to take a Husband out of it.

He knew that she was not only left by her Father entirely at her Guardian's Disposal, but also that he had a very great Influence over her: Therefore, he first demanded Permission of him, to make his Addresses to her; which Mr. *Merit*, knowing the Largeness of his Estate, and thinking it would be an advantageous Match for his Ward, very readily granted. But as neither Ambition nor Avarice had ever tainted the Blood of the *Rambles*; so *Amelia*, not being infected with either of these Vices, could not think of bestowing herself upon any Man, with whom she was certain to live an unhappy Life, either from the Disparity of their Fortunes, or the Disagreement of their Tempers.

VOL. I.

P

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

In which an Intrigue commences at Mr. Merit's, which occasions a bloody Conflict between some of the Persons concerned.

DURING Captain *Merit's* Continuance at his Father's, he daily grew more and more enamoured with *Amelia*; and as both his Person and Accomplishments had made a great Impression on her, she received his Addresses very favourably; but acquainted him withal, that not being as yet at her own Disposal, she advised him, to ask her Guardian's Consent; for as he had behaved to her with the Tenderness of a Parent, ever since she had been under his Care, and she owed a great many Obligations to him, she was, therefore, loth to do any Act, whereby she should incur his Displeasure.

The Captain pondered a little upon this: Having two very strong Reasons for not undertaking it. The first was, the advantageous Proposal that *Amelia* had received from the young 'Squire, to which he knew Mr. *Merit* had given his Consent;
and

and that he interested himself very much in bringing it to bear, he conceiving it to be more for her Benefit, than his most sanguine Wishes for her Welfare could have given him leave to expect : And, secondly, that though he knew his Father not to be of a covetous Disposition, yet it was very probable, that he would think *Amelia's* Fortune to be too small for a Son, that was to come into the Possession of such a large Estate on his own Decease. Besides these, he was sensible, moreover, that his Father had already fixed his Eye on another Match for him, with a rich young Heiress, who had all the Charms that Money could bestow, but very few, if any personal ones. These Reasons prevented the Captain from acquainting his Father with his Inclinations; as he conjectured it would give him much Uneasiness, and very much despaired of reaping any Benefit by so doing. Therefore, he determined to wait the Event of Time, which he hoped would be more propitious to him than at present; rather than to trouble his Father with an Affair, which he had great Reason to think would be a Disturbance to his Repose.

The Captain had a huge, brawny young Fellow, that attended him in the Capacity

of a Servant; but who, like most other Officer's Men, was also enlisted in the Army, and rode in the same Troop to which the Captain belonged.

This Man, whose Name was *James*, was very well versed in the Art of making good his Quarters, as the Soldiers term it: That is, of providing themselves with the best Provision, and other Necessaries, which the Inn, or House afforded, wherever they were lodged.

As the Captain had now been almost a Month at his Father's, *James* had not, for a great while, laid so long at any Quarters without tasting a Bit of Woman's Flesh; and being really wearied with fasting, he began to look sharp for somewhat, wherewith to appease his hungry Appetite, which he found to grow exceeding ravenous, by the Restraint, that, much against his Will, it had lately been obliged to undergo.

The two young Ladies had a Chamber-Maid, that waited upon them, whose Name was *Sally*; who being of a very free jocular Disposition, *James* thought her the fittest Person to apply himself to on this Occasion;

Occasion; and in a short Time he brought Matters so well to bear, that she promised him a Night's Lodging with her.

She therefore took an Opportunity of shewing him the Chamber, where he was to gratify his Expectations, by Day-Light, that he might the easier find his Way to it, in the Dark; and Eleven o'Clock, when she was sure all the Family would be retired to Bed, was the Hour of Affignation, at which he was to enter her Embraces. Tho' as he was very sharp-set, he fain would have procured a Bit to stay his Stomach, at the Time when she was shewing him the Room; and it was not without the greatest Difficulty that she could restrain him from it. But she strongly urging the Danger, of any of the other Servants coming up Stairs in the mean Time, prevailed on him at last to stay till Night, when she promised he should feast himself to his Heart's Content.

James repaired to the Chamber at the Hour appointed, the Door of which was to be left upon the Latch for his readier coming in. He entered in the Dark, and having undressed himself, leaped into Bed; where, instead of the soft Embraces that

he expected to meet with in the Arms of *Sally*, he found himself assailed with a severe Blow on the Face from a Double-Fist; and, at the same Time, heard a hoarse gruff Voice, demanding, with a great Oath, ' who he was, and what he wanted there? '

This amazed him so much that he was unable to answer; but thinking he had mistaken the Room in the Dark, he was just going to acknowledge it; when, suddenly, he began to feel some hearty Blows from a Cudgel, that the Person, who had leapt out of Bed, was now bestowing upon him. Though *James* was really a valiant Fellow, yet having nothing to withstand his Antagonist, and it being so dark that he could not see how to defend himself, he was obliged to stand the Brunt some Time; till at last finding an Opportunity to grapple with his Adversary, he wrenched the Stick out of his Hand, and began to return the other as heavy Blows as he had just before received from him: But chancing to drop his Weapon, and not being able to recover it again in the dark, a close Engagement ensued, when his Antagonist and he came to the Floor together; he falling undermost with such a Jolt, as shook all that Part of the House wherein they were.

One

One of the Footmen, who was not yet gone to Bed, hearing the Noise, and imagining there were Thieves broke into the House, ran directly to the Room from whence the Sound issued, with a lighted Candle in his Hand; where, to his great Surprise, he found the Coachman, who was a lusty Fellow, and *James*, struggling together on the Floor. He soon parted the Combatants; and on his enquiring into the Cause of their Quarrel, he was informed by the Coachman that the other had broke into his Room, and was coming to Bed to him. *James* said it was a Falsity; for that he found the Door open, and had mistaken the Room for *Sally's*. The Footman, being one of her Sweethearts, instantly replied, ‘ and d—n you, what did you want in her Room?’ *James* answered, ‘ for her to pay me the Night’s Lodging she promised me.’—‘ *Sally* promise you a Night’s Lodging with her!’ cries the Footman, ‘ you are a lying Scoundrel for saying it.’ *James*, being a Soldier, could not bear receiving such a foul Appellation, He therefore dealt the Footman a Blow, that drove two of his great Teeth down his Throat. The Footman returned this Salute very manfully; and here followed a

fierce Encounter between them, the Coachman standing by to see fair Play: Excepting that, now and then, he gave *James* a fly Blow or two, out of Friendship to his Fellow-Servant, who he found was too hardly matched.

As all the Servants lay in that Part of the House where this Engagement happened, so the Noise awakened them; and several of the Women came running into the Room, with their lighted Candles, to see what the Matter was: Amongst the rest came *Sally*, who was now very much afraid, on hearing such an Uproar in the Chamber, that she had been guilty of more Mischief than she designed, in disappointing *James* of his Expectations with her.

James, on seeing her, and knowing by the Light of the Candles, that it was the same Room which she had showed him in the Day-Time, was so enraged at his being jilted by her, that he could not forbear saluting her with some very coarse Appellations, accompanied with a good Kick on the B——ch; whereat she screaming out, and the Coachman and Footman, (who both made Love to her) thinking that he had done her more Injury than really was,
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fell together upon *James* and beat him very handsomely. For though he was very strong and raw-bon'd, yet having but just before engaged them separately, he found their joint Force too much for him to withstand; and was, therefore, just upon the Point of calling out for Quarter, when Mr. *Merit's* Butler and another of the Men-Servants entering, parted the Combatants; who were by this Time so besmeared with Blood, that there was hardly any distinguishing of them.

The Battle being ended, the Women retired to their Apartments: Though not without *Sally's* exchanging some hot Words with the Captain's Servant. But as the Blows that had passed between him and her two Favourites, had pretty well allayed the Heat of all their Passions, so it was not to be revived again by these Blasts of Wind. The Butler, after hearing the Occasion of the Fray, and laughing heartily at the Disappointment the Captain's Servant had met with, invited them down into his Master's Cellar to make it up; taking also the other Men-Servants, that were present, along with them to keep Peace, in case the Liquor should revive their former Animosity. After making a

heartly Libation together in the Cellar, with several Bottles of good Wine and Ale, they shook Hands and retired to their several Chambers; as well as the Strength of the Liquor would permit them to get thither.

The many Jokes and Scoffs that *James* received on Account of the former Adventure, made him quite weary of staying at Mr. *Merit's*. He heartily wished his Master would leave the House, and very probably would have quitted his Service on this Occasion, without waiting for his Departure from thence, had not he been enlisted in the same Regiment of Dragoons, and under his Master's Command as a Soldier, as well as a Servant. This obliged him to exert a Virtue very ornamental to his Profession, though seldom found among them; and he was forced to endure the Obloquy and Derision, that attended this Affair with Patience.

Sally had played *James* this scurvy Trick with a great deal of Premeditation : For finding what he wanted to be at, she had acquainted the Coachman, who was her chief Favourite therewith. We say her chief Favourite : For being a very likely, gay,

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gay, merry Lafs, ſhe had ſeveral Lovers amongſt her Fellow-Servants, but the Coachman was him that had the greateſt Share in her Affections: And who upon being acquainted with the Affair, of the Captain's Servant ſolliciting her for a Night's Lodging, had directed her to conduct him to his Room, where he ſaid he would give him his Skin full of Diverſion.

This they contrived together, to bring about in the Manner before related; and for the Conſequences whereof, eſpecially the rendering him the Jeſt of the Family, *James* ſwore a ſevere Revenge againſt her, if ever it lay in his Way to return it. As Fortune ſometimes delights in playing a Game at Miſchief, ſhe was not long before ſhe gave him an Opportunity, of making a full Retaliation of the Affronts he had received from his deceitful Miſtreſs; with the Manner of which we ſhall more fully acquaint the Reader in the enſuing Chapter.

C H A P. XIII.

The End of the Intrigue, which concludes this Book.

AS the Captain continued some Time at his Father's, after the foregoing Adventure of his Man *James*, so all Animosity between the latter and *Sally* seemed to be dropt, at least as to outward Appearance; though *James* watched very narrowly for an Opportunity to return the Trick she had played him, before he quitted Mr. *Merit's*.

From the great Intimacy that was between *Sally* and the Coachman, he imagined that the latter received some very particular Favours from her; and by prying very narrowly into their Behaviour he discovered, that she generally crept to his Room, when the Family were in Bed, where she took up her Lodging for most Part of the Night. Having made this Discovery, he took the Opportunity, the last Evening but one that his Master was to stay at Mr. *Merit's*, to provide himself with two Bottles of Port Wine, into one

of which he put a good Quantity of Brandy ; and invited the Coachman to come and drink with him in his Room.

As the Coachman always loved Liquor, especially when he could get it at free Cost, he readily accepted the Invitation ; and *James* plyed him so heartily, first with the neat Port, and then with the other, which was mixed with Brandy, that in a short Time he compleatly finished the Coachman ; or in other Words, made him thoroughly drunk, so that he was not able to get to his own Chamber ; but fell asleep upon *James's* Bed : Whereupon, locking the Coachman in, *James* went to his Room, and directly got into his Bed. He had laid down but a short Time, when he heard a Woman's Foot-steps, treading softly along the Gallery ; immediately after which he heard the Door open, which was left purposely on the Latch, and presently afterwards, he pretending to be asleep, a Woman came and laid herself down by him. Being confident, by these Circumstances, that she was the Person he expected, he directly turned to her, and enjoyed all the Satisfaction in her Embraces, that her Coyness had before denied him.

Their

Their Pastime being over, she fell fast asleep; when he stole softly out of Bed, and locking the Door of the Room, fastened her in; and then retired to his own Chamber: Where getting into Bed, he let the Coachman sleep on the Outside till Morning, when all the Servants being up, and *Sally* missing, and not to be found in her Bed, occasioned great Enquiry to be made after her.

On waking, she was exceedingly surprized to find her Bed-Fellow gone, who always used to raise her early, that she might recover her own Room before any of the rest of the Family were stirring; and putting on her Cloaths, she was more amazed at finding herself locked in.

What to do in this Situation she knew not. The Lock, upon Trial, was too strong to be forced.—It was broad Day Light, and she was wanted about her Business: To call any of the Servants to open the Door for her, would have been betraying herself. In this Quandary she set down on the Bed-Side, and waited, in hopes that the Coachman, who she thought had

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had locked the Door inadvertantly, would come, when he recollected it, and release her : But he, knowing nothing of this Affair, soon after he awaked on *James's* Bed, set out for the Stables, to look after his Horses.

Sally having waited some Time in this Confinement, at last the young Ladies Bell rang for her to come and attend them at their Rising; when another of the Maid-Servants going into their Room, acquainted them that she had not been seen that Morning.

As they thought that she might have overslept herself, they directly ordered the Maid to go up into her Room and call her; but Mr. *Merit's* being an old *Gothic* built House, that had formerly been a Sort of a Monastery, the Gallery where the Servants lay had something so very awful and gloomy in the Look, as terrified most of the Maid-Servants from ever venturing in it by themselves : And this Maid, not being one of the most couragious of her Sex, thought proper to take two others with her for Company, before she proceeded thither in Search of *Sally*.—Besides this, there was a traditionary Story, of very long standing in

in the Family, that one of Mr. *Merit's* Ancestor's, who had died immensely rich, without making any Will, or at least any that could be found, walked in this Gallery ; and had often been seen there, even in the Day-Time. And as *Sally* had been so long missing, and Nobody had seen her that Morning; this Maid was not without some Apprehensions, that the old Gentleman of the House, might have taken a Fancy to carry her off with him to his subterraneous Mansion.—Especially, as she was certain that *Sally* was not in Bed in the Morning, when she and the rest of the Servants got up ; though it was evident from the Sheets being tumbled, that she had lain there Part of the Night.

Judith therefore, for so was this Lass named, directly taking two of the other Maids along with her, they proceeded to search all the Rooms in the long Gallery, but without finding *Sally*, till they came to the Coachman's, which was at the Corner ; when perceiving the Key on the Outside, they opened it, and, to their great Surprise, found her sitting very pensively on the Side of his Bed.

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On their enquiring how she came to be locked into that Room, and in such a Dress, she answered: That the Coachman had called to her, as she was going by the Room Door, and directly, out of Wagge-ry, had locked her in. Now one of these Maids, whose Name was *Kate*, having long been a Rival to *Sally* in the Coachman's Affection, and thinking this Story very improbable, immediately turned down the Bed-Cloaths; and finding the Sheets very much tumbled, and also the Impressions of two People to be seen plainly in the Bed, she directly swore, somebody else had lain there that Night besides the Coachman.

Some of our celebrated Poets, but we cannot at this Time recollect which, has very justly remarked that,

No Arts can blind a jealous Woman's Eyes.

This proved true in the present Case; for as *Kate* had long entertained a violent Suspicion of the Intimacy between *Sally* and the Coachman, so she needed not half the present Circumstances to convince her of their having been in Bed together. And, on
casting

casting her Eyes a little farther about her, she perceived *Sally's* blue Ribband, with which she generally bound on her Night-Cap, lying between the Sheets, about the Middle of the Bed : For, in the amorous Encounter she had been engaged in, it slipped off from her Head, and she really did not miss it till this very Minute.

Upon *Kate's* seeing this, she directly cried out : ‘ Hey Day ! what’s here ?——
 ‘ surely our Coachman don’t wear Top-
 ‘ Knots.—Well, well, I see how it is,
 ‘ kissing goes by Favour.’ And dropping a low Curtesy, said to *Sally* : ‘ Madam, I
 ‘ wish you much Joy of your Spouse, for
 ‘ I suppose you are married, by your bed-
 ‘ ding together.’

Sally's Patience was now quite exhausted : When asking the other what she meant by that Speech, she immediately fastened both her Fists in her Hair, and pulled her to the Ground. *Kate* rising again, flew at her ; and they engaged each other Tooth and Nail for a considerable Time, clawing one another’s Faces very handsomely.

During this Encounter up came the Coachman, ‘ something that he wanted
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in his Room; where finding these two Harpies in close Conflict, he stood amazed for some Moments, not knowing what to make of it: However, by the Assistance of the other two Maids, he presently parted them. *Sally* being grown quite outrageous at having her Face, on which she set a great Value, thus maul'd by the other, directly burst out into Tears, and upbraided him, saying:—‘ How could you serve me so, you base Fellow you, must I undergo this Usage to humour your foolish Tricks?’—He, not suffering her to explain herself, interrupted her, asking very inadvertently, what foolish Trick he had done to her? ‘ I have not seen you To-day before, as I know of,’ said he.—‘ No, no,’ replied *Kate*, ‘ feeling may serve better than seeing, with some People.’—‘ You lye, Hussy,’ says *Sally* to her, ‘ he never touched me in his Life-time; but, I say, he has carried his Fooling, by locking me into the Room, a little too far, to give such Sluts as you an Opportunity to make a Handle of it.’ On hearing this the Coachman stared, not knowing what to make of the Affair: But, however, as he thought, there was somewhat in the Matter that he did not understand, so, for Reasons of Policy, he judged it best

best to side with *Sally*; and therefore replied : He had only locked her in out of Roguery, and did not think it would have occasioned any such Fray. After some few more Altercations between the two Rivals, the Women walked down Stairs together, *Sally* and *Kate* scolding all the Way ; and left the Coachman by himself, to ruminate upon the Matter.

Kate, out of Malice to the other, soon took care to spread about throughout the Family, and even to all Strangers that came thither, how that *Sally* had been caught in the Coachman's Room, locked in ; and she would now and then, though probably by way of Mistake, make a small Addition of her own to the Story, and aver, that she was found in his Bed. This was Nuts to *James*, who was well pleased to hear what had happened, and kept the Secret of the whole Affair very closely in his own Bosom.

As *Sally* was very much vexed at this Disaster, so she took an Opportunity, the same Day, of having a private Conference with the Coachman; and upbraided him very severely with his Neglect of her, in locking the Door upon her. He directly
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asked her what Door she meant; and swore, that he had neither been in his Room or Bed all the Night: Saying, that he had been drinking with *James*, the Captain's Man, in his Chamber, and that there he had got fuddled, and had slept till Morning upon his Bed.

Sally, on hearing this, which the Coachman confirmed with many bitter Execrations, and recollecting some Circumstances of her last Night's Adventure, immediately began to smell a Rat: Her Colour went and came very quick, and she was almost ready to faint away, which the Coachman perceiving, gave her a Dram of Brandy, out of a small Bottle that he usually carried in his Pocket; and, on her reviving a little, he asked her, how she came in the Room. — To which she answered: She went thither at the same Time as usual; that he was in Bed and asleep, when she directly got in, and laid herself down by his Side.

After some more Eclaircissements upon the Affair of her coming to Bed to him, and what ensued thereupon, which may perhaps be better omitted than rehearsed, as it might not be agreeable to our chaste
and

and fair Readers, they both concluded, some scurvy Trick had been played them: And on comparing Notes a little more together, they were confirmed, that it could have been done by no other Person but *James*; against whom they vowed a severe Revenge, whenever Opportunity should furnish either of them with the Means of accomplishing it.

James soon perceived, by the glum Looks and Frowns that both *Sally* and the Coachman cast at him whenever they met, that his Roguery was discovered. But, luckily for him, as the Captain, his Master, was obliged to set out for his Quarters the next Morning, a fine Horse, that he valued very much, was taken ill, which the Captain thought better to leave at his Father's, till his Recovery, than to venture him on so long a Journey; and therefore *James* was dispatched that very Day to *York*, to send a Post-Chaise for his Master, who was to come there the next Day, where *James* was to wait for him; and thereby he avoided all the Designs that might have been contrived against him.

However, he took care before he left the House, to communicate the whole Affair

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fair to some of the Men-Servants in Mr. *Merit's* Family : Who, when *James* was gone, roasted the Coachman and *Sally* so much about it, as made their Lives quite uneasy ; and the more especially, as he that occasioned this Mischief, and afterwards divulged it, was now quite out of the Reach of their Resentments.

The many Scoffs and Jeers that she received, on this Account, from her Fellow-Servants, at last worked *Sally* up to such a Pitch, that she was no longer able to endure the House : But giving Warning to the two young Ladies to provide themselves with a Servant in her Stead, she not long afterwards quitted her Place, and went to live in another Family in the Bishoprick of *Durham* ; where she reckoned herself pretty secure, by the Distance of the two Places, from ever hearing any Thing more about the Matter. But the poor Coachman was obliged to keep his Station, as he could not find such another good Service in the County ; and, if he is yet living, remains to this Day, the Butt of some of the Family, on Account of his being cornuted by *James*, the Captain's Man.

Early

Early the next Morning, Captain *Merit* set out attended by one of his Father's Domestics to *York*, in order to go from thence to his Quarters. But, before his Departure from Mr. *Merit's*, he engaged *Amelia* to promise him, that she would not give her Hand or Heart to any other; in Return for which, he deeply vowed the greatest Perseverance in Love and Constancy to her.

On his Arrival at his Quarters, he was received there, with the utmost Tokens of Joy and Satisfaction by his Brother Officers, who were all heartily glad at his Return to his Regiment: For the Captain, being an exceeding sweet tempered Gentleman, was universally beloved among them. — Here we shall bid adieu to him for a while, and put an End to the first Volume of this History.

The End of the First Volume.



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